

THE  
INSOLVENT:  
OR,  
FILIAL PIETY.  
A  
TRAGEDY.

ACTED AT THE  
THEATRE in the HAY-MARKET,  
(By AUTHORITY)

Under the DIRECTION of  
Mr. C I B B E R.

WRITTEN BY THE LATE  
AARON HILL, *Esq;*  
AUTHOR OF MEROPE;  
Partly on a Plan of Sir WILLIAM D'AVENANT  
and Mr. MASSENGER'S.

L O N D O N :

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[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]

THE  
SOLVENT  
OF  
RURAL  
Y.  
THE  
HAY-MARKET  
(1)



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XX

# P R E F A C E.

**A**BOVE thirty years ago, Mr. WILKS (then one of the patentees of the theatre royal) gave an old manuscript play, call'd, *The Guiltless Adulteress; or, Judge in his own Cause*, to Mr. THEOPHILUS CIBBER, who was then manager of what us'd to be call'd, *the summer company*. This company consisted, in general, of the junior part of the performers; who, during the vacation time, commonly acted twice, or thrice, a week. As they play'd on shares (divided in proportion according to their several salaries stipulated in the winter) their endeavours to please the town generally produc'd 'em double pay, on those nights; sometimes more.

This kept most of 'em from strolling into the country, for the summer season: it added to their income, and gave 'em an opportunity of getting forward in their business, in a more regular manner, than has been practis'd of late years. It had its effect: performers then try'd their force in characters, in the summer; and became, by practice therein, gradually acquainted with their business, and the town with them. Nor was every one suppos'd to be equal, at their very setting out, to the most capital characters of the drama.

But to return to the play.--- By the hand, and the long time it had been in the possession of the managers, it was suppos'd to have been one of Sir WILLIAM D'AVENANT's (formerly a patentee) and, by the opening of the piece, palpably was founded on a play of MASSENGER's, call'd, *The Fatal Dowry*.--- (this last piece has often been enquired after in vain)---Mr. WILKS recommended it to Mr. CIBBER to be got up in the summer, with some alterations.---It lay by some time.---In the year 1733, it was intended for the stage in the summer.---But the performers were then shut out of the theatre, by the then patentees of Drury-Lane.---A candid account of which will be given, when Mr. CIBBER has a proper opportunity to speak thereof, in his purpos'd history of the stage.

## P R E F A C E.

In the following year, when the principal comedians of that time return'd from the theatre in the Hay-Market, and play'd under the direction of Mr. FLETEWOOD, it was propos'd agen to have a summer company; as the use of it, both to the actors and managers, had been experienced. Many light pieces were then reviv'd, and several new petit pieces brought on the stage; such as, *The Devil to Pay*, *The Mock Doctor*, &c. which prov'd afterwards lasting entertainments in the winter season.

'Twas in *The Devil to Pay*, in a summer season, Mrs. CLIVE (then Miss RAFTOR) first surpriz'd a delighted audience with a proof of her extraordinary genius, in the character of NELL. Her spirited simplicity, and strong natural humour, carried her thro' the part with an astonishing variety, and propriety. She shew'd herself an excellent original.---She has had many followers, some imitators; and, 'tis but justice to add, no equal. She then promis'd to be, what she has since prov'd, one of the first performers of the stage: and, when judiciously examined in the general various cast of parts she acts, 'tis imagined, she will be allow'd not to be inferior to any performer of her time.

Well, this is digression on digression---(pardon it, reader, and let it pass)---In 1734, a summer company was agen propos'd. They play'd once the play of *George Barnwell*, to a very great house. The manager (jealous, least the company shou'd get too much) order'd the farther acting to be stopp'd. It was judg'd, indeed, the jealousy of some actors (who were not concern'd in the summer) gave this advice---so the affair dropp'd---and there has been no summer playing since.

But, to return to our play.---On a revisal, it was judg'd to want some alterations---Accordingly, Mr. GIBBER requested his kind friend the late Mr. HILL (who was never happier than when he had an opportunity to do a friendly office) to correct it---How much he was taken with the play, will appear on a perusal of some letters of his relative thereto, (publish'd in his collection) and sent to Mr. THEOPHILUS GIBBER, about the year 1746.---Let it suffice here, to add---Mr. HILL almost new wrote the whole; and the last act was entirely his, in conduct, sentiment, diction, &c.

## P R E F A C E.

It was brought on the stage at the theatre in the Hay-Market early this year, 1758---When his Grace the Duke of DEVONSHIRE humanely consider'd the unfortunate, extraordinary condition of a comedian (who has had more frequent opportunities of happily entertaining the town) and gave him liberty to try his fortune, awhile, at the little theatre in the Hay-Market.

But what mighty matters could be hop'd, from a young, raw, unexperienced company, hastily collected, and as hastily to be employ'd (but sinking men catch at reeds) while establish'd theatres were open to entertain the town, with the united force of tragedy, comedy, opera, pantomime, song, dance, and a long train of *et ceteras*---Some rational, and some other exhibitions, which are so frequently follow'd in a winter season?

Mr. CIBBER was out of pocket by his undertaking; yet this does not prevent his having a grateful sense of the favours he received, from those noble personages, and other friends, who have frequently patronis'd his undertakings.---To acknowledge a favour, is but gratitude---To name the persons, might appear vanity.

It may not be improper, on this occasion to signify, as Mr. CIBBER has not had the wish'd success at the theatre in the Hay-Market---That Mr. RICH has, with great good-nature, granted the use of his theatre in Covent-Garden to Mr. CIBBER, for his benefit, the beginning of next month---When a *new mock-tragedy*, (which many persons of taste have approv'd of, and which the author has kindly allow'd Mr. CIBBER to make use of on this occasion) will be acted, with all the variety of scenes, machines, songs, dirges, processions, &c. &c.---requisite to embellish (*a-la-moderne*) this extraordinary heroick piece,



# PROLOGUE.

Spoke by Mr. CIBBER.

(Then in mourning for his father)

**O**UR scenes, to-night, would nature's pangs impart ;  
True filial piety should reach the heart.

I feel it now---That thought the tear shall claim ;  
To merit sacred, and immortal fame.

Now sleeps the honour'd dust, which gave me birth ;  
Recent in death, but newly lodg'd in earth :

Forgive the heart-felt grief ! the filial lay !

The public tear might drop o'er CIBBER's clay !

His comic force---for more than half an age ;

His well-wrote moral scene, his manly page,

Your fathers fathers pleas'd---His scenes shall live ;

And, to your childrens children, equal pleasure give.

Forgive the filial dews that thus distil---

'Tis from the heart they flow, and not from skill :

By nature mov'd, your patience thus I try ;

Art would but give my suffering soul the lie.

Now for the father's sake, the son endure ;

Let his paternal worth your smile secure.

Let his rich merit my poor wants atone ;

His high desert I plead---Boast none my own.

Let then this tribute, to the father due ;

This public tribute, be approv'd by you.

Whatever faults may thro' this piece be shewn,

No living bard can now those faults atone,

While such you, transient, mark---Let mercy spare,

Such parts as you may think some merit share.

Where judgment wakes, let candour intervene,

Mark out the failings with that golden mean,

Nor for a single sentence damn a scene.

To our young actors too your smiles extend ;

Youth claims indulgence---as want claims a friend :

Whate'er their flatt'ring hopes, their fears are great,

Which your applause alone can dissipate :

And, 'tis a maxim with the truly brave,

They triumph most, who generously save.

# PROLOGUE.

By the Late AARON HILL, Esq;

**P**OO*R* (at first op'ning) seems the plot we chuse :  
But no felt indigence unfir'd the muse.

*Insolvent pris'ner*----bears no awful sound !

*Yet*---hope strong buildings ---on that humble ground.

*Debtor and creditor* th' account begin :

But then comes joy---wise---mis'ry---death and sin !

While, from these varying lights, fierce fires we raise,

Lend but attention---and your tears shall praise.

Few are the public stains, that tinge the fame

Of this brave, rich, good-natur'd nation's name :

*Yet*, one there is---from time's long license, grown---

That blots out pity---and turns flesh, to stone.

'Tis---the deaf rage, that (where hard wants oppress)

Doubles th' insolvent sufferer's dire distress.

Stung by this wasp, past friendships lose their weight ;

Warp'd estimation wears a face like hate :

Suspended mercy bids affliction smart ;

And, in a scale of flint, immures her heart.

Self---yet, unreach'd by woe---made proud, by gain,

Blind to disaster---and insulting pain ;

In ease, short-sighted---hugs her lot, secure---

And marks no difference---'twixt the base, and poor ;

Flings from calamity, turns short on grief,

And, to the prison's grave, refers relief.

So---for awhile---triumphantly severe !

Tow'rs the bid insult---and disdains to hear.

At last, comes disappointment home---Then, starts.

Touch'd sense---and wonders at mens cruel hearts !

Then (self still upmost) the rous'd sleeper shakes ;

And insolently hopes---compassion wakes !

But scorn close waits upon the scorner's heel ;

And he, that shunn'd to hear---vouchsafes to feel.

Too late, he feels !---The Eye, that wakes for all,

Fore-doom'd his anguish---and enjoys his fall ;

Points,

## PROLOGUE.

*Poins, to his trembling view, that wise man's school---*  
*That god-given law---th' all-tempting golden rule:*

*Bids him thank bitterness, for due despair;*

*And, since he cou'd not pity, learn to bear.*

*From our last age's plays exemplar aim,*

*Present and past, we find too much the same:*

*Stern, unrelenting int'rest's partial will*

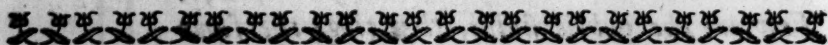
*Reign'd then resistless---and it reigns so still.*

*How happy were th' effect---cou'd miseries, here,*

*From pride's correction (mourn'd by pity's tear)*

*Teach the dry rock to melt, in pain-touch'd flow;*

*And ease th' unhoping crouds, that sigh, in woe!*



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### M E N.

Old AUMELE, first president of Burgundy.

Young AUMELE, in love with AMELIA.

Count CHALONS, son of the marshal of Burgundy.

LA FOY, his friend, a rough soldier.

VALDORE, father to AMELIA, and predecessor to Old  
AUMELE.

BELGARD, cousin, and dependent on AUMELE.

LE FER, servant to VALDORE.

### W O M E N.

AMELIA, daughter to VALDORE.

FLORELLA, her maid.

PRESIDENTS, ADVOCATES, CLIENTS, GOALER, &c.

SCENE, the capital of Burgundy.





THE  
INSOLVENT:  
OR,  
FILIAL PIETY.

---

ACT I. SCENE I.

*A court sitting. Judges on the bench. Lawyers with clients at the bar.*

2d PRESIDENT.

**H**AIL! reverend judges! May this meeting prove  
Prosperous to us, and end in general good.

Old AUMELE.

Speak to the point, the cause of this our summons.

2d PRESIDENT.

We meet, my lords, reluctant to dispose  
The awful place, and high important power  
Of first in council of this sacred court:  
This, to our grief, the reverend wife VALDORE  
Resolves, grown weary of the ponderous charge,  
Here to give up this day.

VALDORE.

Too heavy trust! it press'd my conscious weakness:  
Yet, not for private ease wou'd I resign it,

B

But,

10      *The* INSOLVENT: *Or,*

But, bow'd beneath the burden, sinking age  
Implores your kind release from care too weighty.

Old AUMELE.

Still to preside, we all wou'd gladly move you.

VALDORE.

It must not be; nor can your lordships goodness  
Deny my poor remains of time the refuge  
Of some short space, for penitence and prayer.  
Let me employ my last low ebb of breath,  
In cares for future life-----and learn to die. -----  
I pray the court to ease me of this burden.

3d PRESIDENT.

The court entreats your lordship wou'd be pleas'd  
To guide the general voice-----The choice you make  
Will be, by all, confirm'd.

VALDORE.

The lord AUMELE.

3d PRESIDENT.

[*After a pause---the presidents bow.*] The court allows it---  
Be it so decreed.

VALDORE.

But here are suitors, and their cause may carry  
More weight, than forms like those attending on  
This choice-----Dispatch them first.

3d PRESIDENT.

Please you, my lord AUMELE, to take the chair,  
We wou'd begin.

Old AUMELE.

[*Seats himself.*] Speak, ADVOCATE; we hear.

ADVOCATE.

The cause my client offers to your lordships  
Is in itself so pleaful, that it needs  
Nor eloquence, nor favour, in this court.  
The guilty, when condemn'd, confess your justice;  
Our cause shall claim your mercy.

Old AUMELE.

Speak to the cause.

ADVOCATE.

# FILIAL PIETY.

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ADVOCATE.

'Tis the cause speaks.-----Great Burgundy's blest state  
Had once----But stop. [*Pause.*] To say that her dead marshal,  
The father of this brave young lord, [*Pointing to CHALONS.*  
my client,

Honour'd his country's name by far-fam'd service,  
Wou'd tax assertion, by a doubt undue.

You all, my lords, remember that so well,

'Twere injury to prove it.-----In his life,

He grew indebted to these thrifty men; [*Pointing to the creditors.*

And failing, by repeated loss in war,

Of power to free himself from such low claims;

I weep to tell it-----But, his country sav'd,

Saw him imprison'd-----and in prison die.

It is a maxim in our law-----that debts

Die, with insolvent debtors: But these men,

Length'ning malicious pain beyond life's bounds,

From death snatch bodies for new chains.

They dare deny him ev'n his funeral rites;

Rites, not by heathens held from wretched slaves.

We humbly, therefore, pray your lordships pity,

Setting aside their more than barbarous insult,

To disappoint revenge-----That woe may rest.

Old AUMELE.

How long have you, sir, practis'd in this court?

ADVOCATE.

Full twenty years, my lord.

Old AUMELE.

How!-----Twenty years?-----

So bold an ignorance had half convinc'd me,

Your judgment scarce cou'd number twenty days.

ADVOCATE.

I hope, in such a cause as this, my lord-----

Old AUMELE.

How dare you thus presume to urge the court

(Law's sacred guardian) to dispense with law?

Terror of bankrupts gave this statute birth.

Go home, and with more care peruse known acts;

And then make motions.

B 2

ADVOCATE.



ADVOCATE.

I submit-----but mourn.

[Exit ADVOCATE.]

LA FOY.

Can then your lordships think, that he whose plea  
Supports a friendless cause (condemn'd by law,  
Tho' justice owns it) errs by honest zeal?

Old AUMELE.

Prodigious arrogance!

LA FOY.

Is reason such!

Or is it here a maxim, that the pleader  
Reads on the judge's face his cause's worth?

3d PRESIDENT.

Too bold LA FOY-----Pay reverence where 'tis due.

LA FOY.

Or was the power you act by, trusted with you  
To qualify no rigour in the laws;  
But doubling ev'ry wound that mercy feels,  
Treat pity like a guilt?-----Oh, shame of state!-----  
This strictness of your four decree, that grinds  
The debtor's dying bones, to feast the spight  
Of a still greedy creditor, who gapes  
For payment from the grave's unclosing dust;  
Condemns misfortune, to let crimes go free.

Old AUMELE.

You, sir, that prate thus saucily, what are you?

LA FOY.

I am a soldier-----If you know not me,  
Ne'er has yourself been known in honour's courts.  
Beneath the banner of the dead CHALONS,  
Long witness of his deeds, I serv'd, in blood;  
Sav'd your ungrateful head, and lent it means  
To lift that haughty brow-----my partial judge.

3d PRESIDENT.

Forbear, bold Man-----'Tis rashness past support.

LA FOY.

Let those proud angry Eyes flash lightning round,  
Each object they can meet feels dumb disdain;

Shrinks.

# FILIAL PIETY.

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Shrinks from their blood-shot beams, and frowns within :  
Long had they been, ere this, by some fierce hand  
Torn from their tasteless orbs ; or, fav'd for shame,  
Had, justly weeping, serv'd some needy foe ;  
Had I not worn a sword, and us'd it better,  
Than, in disgrace of law, thou dost thy tongue.

Old AUMELE.

If insolence, like this, pass here unpunish'd-----

LA FOY.

Yet I----who in my country's balanc'd scale  
Out-weigh'd a thousand tame proud logs like thee,  
Confess myself unworthy name, compar'd  
With the least claim of my dead general's worth.  
Then from his numberless, long line of glories,  
Make choice of any one, e'en of the meanest ;  
Whether against that wily fox of France,  
The politick LEWIS, or more desperate Swiss ;  
Still shalt thou find it poize, beyond all tricks,  
Craft, views, or acts, that ever gown-men thought of.

Old AUMELE.

Away-----to prison with him.

LA FOY.

Off. [*To the guards.*] If curses,  
Urg'd in the bitterness of aching wrong,  
E'er pierc'd the ear of heav'n----and drew down bolts,  
On heads that most deserv'd them, let not mine,  
Now, rise in vain.-----Fear, from this moment ;  
And, fearing, feel ; and tremble to sustain,  
The whips that furies shake o'er cruel men.  
[*To AUMELE.*] You have a son ; take care this curse not  
reach him.

You clods [*To the creditors.*] in human forms, that cou'd deny  
Earth, gentler than your own, its mournful claim,  
To cover the remains of that great chief.  
May all your wives prove false, and bring you heirs  
Of liberal hearts, whose riots may undo you !  
Your factors all prove thieves, your debtors bankrupts ;  
And thou, stern patron of their blushless plea,  
Live to lose all thy lordships ; not even save

Room

14 *The* INSOLVENT: OR,

Room on thy dunghill for thyself and dog.  
Be old before thou diest, to die more wretched !  
That, as thou hast deny'd the dead a grave,  
Thy living misery in vain may wish one.-----  
I've well begun----on----imitate----exceed. [To CHALONS.

Old AUMELE.

Force him away. [Exit LA FOY guarded.

3d PRESIDENT.

Remember where you are. [To CHALONS.

CHALONS.

Thus low the wretched bends to thank your counsel.  
I'll teach my temper'd language to suspend  
All sense of filial pain-----and speak but duty.  
Not that I fear to raise my voice as loud,  
And with as fierce complaint, as touch'd LA FOY ;  
But that from me, who am so deeply sunk  
In misery's gulph, so hopeless in distress,  
'Twou'd seem the rash man's means to cure despair,  
By casting off his load, that ends with life.  
No-----let my suffering duty to the dead  
Live on-----and pay the tribute of your praise,  
Honest severity renowns your justice :  
Why should such white, unfinning souls as yours,  
Forgive the guilt you act not ?-----Why shou'd service  
By any man perform'd, to bless his country,  
Exact his country's mercy ?-----What tho' my father,  
Ere scarce arriv'd at youth, our acted man ;  
Number'd that day no part of life, wherein  
He snatch'd not some new trophy from your foes,  
Was he for that to triumph o'er your courts,  
Superior to the laws he fought to save ?  
What tho' the sums he dy'd indebted for,  
Were borrow'd, not for his, but publick use,  
Shou'd he be free from payment ; because poor,  
From a spent patrimony, kindly spread  
To the starv'd soldiers wants ?-----'Twas his brave choice ;  
And, when the willing suffer,-----are they wrong'd ?

Old AUMELE.

The precedent were ill-----

CHALONS.



## FILIAL PIETY.

CHALONS.

True, my kind lord!

What is it to your courts, that weigh but laws,  
That after all our great defeats in war,  
Which in their dreadful ruins buried quick  
Courage and hope in all men, but himself;  
He forc'd the foe from that proud height of conquest,  
To tremble in his turn---and sue for peace!

What tho' he sav'd an hundred thousand lives,  
By hard fatigues, that robb'd him of his own;  
Dauntless to summer heats, and winter's frost,  
Ill airs, mines, cannons, and th' unsparing sword;  
Was he, for that, to hope escape from debt,  
Or privilege from prison?

3d PRESIDENT.

'Twas his fault

To be so prodigal----he shou'd have spar'd.

Old AUMELE.

The state allow'd him what maintain'd their army.

CHALONS.

You say he shou'd have spar'd---- He shou'd indeed----  
Have spar'd, to trust his hopes on hopeless ground.  
I too will spare to speak the pangs I feel,  
And feed my thoughts within.----Yet to these men,  
[To the creditors.] To these soft-hearted men, these wise men,  
here;

These only good men----Men that pay their debts;  
To these, I turn my hopes----these honest souls!

1st CREDITOR.

And so they are.

2d CREDITOR.

It is our doctrine, sir.

CHALONS.

Be constant in it----lest you change your road,  
And straggle to salvation----Do not cheat  
The devil of his best dues----make punctual payment.  
But my sad swelling heart forgets its cue----  
On deaf and narrow natures, such as yours,

I will

16 *the* INSOLVENT: Or,

I will not waste one hint that honour loves ;  
 The court shall squeeze no scruple from the law,  
 That lends your felon hearts the weight of right.  
 I know there is no musick to your ears  
 More pleasing, than the groans of men in pain :  
 The tears of widows, and the orphans cry,  
 Feast but your happier sense of wealth's coarse joy.  
 But rather than my father's reverend dust,  
 Shall want its place in that still monument  
 Where all his silent ancestors sleep safe,  
 Take me, your living pledge-----Renounce the dead,  
 And, in my fetter'd freedom, find revenge.  
 I am possess'd of strength to scorn your malice,  
 Shun the detested world, and love restraint.  
 I wou'd forget the sun, that shines on you,  
 And chuse my dwelling where no light can enter.-----  
 Release my father's corps,

VALDORE.

Alas ! young lord,  
 Consider well what hopes you cast away ;  
 Your liberty, youth, joy, life, friends and fame.  
 Your bounty is employ'd upon a subject,  
 That cannot feel its vastness : The known glory  
 Of your dead father vindicates his urn,  
 Treads on their living dust who wrong his name,  
 And breaks the prison's gates that bind his body.

Old AUMELE.

Let him alone-----the young man loves renown :  
 If he courts misery, let misery meet him.  
 Provided these consent, the court objects not.

CHALONS.

Consent !-----the wrongful doubt offends their wisdom.  
 Can these trade-tools lie fullen, and shun work,  
 When willing interest hires 'em ?-----Calls their idol,  
 And shall their zeal grow deaf-----and drop their worship?-----  
 From my dead father's corps what hopes of profit ?  
 Nay, they have there no chance of giving pain.  
 What relish of revenge, where 'tis not felt ?

# FILIPIAL PIETY.

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In me they're sure, at least of present vengeance,  
And cherish prospect of some future gain, nor grieve that there's nothing

1st CREDITOR.

What think you of the offer?-----Shall we close?

2d CREDITOR.

I like the motion well-----It gives some hopes.

1st CREDITOR.

Some young, unthinking girl, or gay, warm widow,  
Pleas'd with his fame for manly deeds in arms,  
May pay us all our debts, and bind him hers.

3d PRESIDENT.

What is your answer?

2d CREDITOR.

You shall speak for all.

1st CREDITOR.

Make all our actions on his father laid,  
Stand the son's debts, and we release the body.

Old AUMELE.

The court must grant you that.

CHALONS.

I thank you all.

In this you have confer'd a glory on me,

That nobly over-pays your envious view.

Come, lead me to the gloom I long to find;

'Twill free me from your forms, and shade my own.

[Exit, with creditors, officers, &c.]

Old AUMELE.

Strange madness!

VALDORE.

Madness, do you call it!-----Term it

Strange, generous extacy of matchless virtue!

Worthy of happier fortune, nobler fate!-----

But rest that now unargued.-----To my cause

Already I have found your lordships bounty

So lavish in your grants, that it should teach me

To limit my desires to narrower bounds.

C

3d PRE-



18 *The* INSOLVENT: Or,

3d PRESIDENT.  
There's nothing you can ask, we wou'd not grant.

2d PRESIDENT.  
Our wills are all your own; pray use 'em freely.

VALDORE.  
It has been here, you know, the court's kind custom,  
Confirm'd by time's long venerable practice,  
That at surrender of the place I held,  
Some grant indulg'd confirms a favour ask'd.  
As proof then of your grace, that loves to give,  
I tempt its proffer'd bounty.

3d PRESIDENT.  
Think it yours.

VALDORE.  
I ask remission for that rash LA FOY;  
And that you, lord AUMELE, whose wrong partook  
Th' affront that mov'd the court, will pardon with it,  
And sign his wish'd enlargement.

Old AUMELE.  
Nay, my lord, demand one half of my estate-----Take all-----  
But spare me this strange prayer-----It warms my wonder!

VALDORE.  
If I must be deny'd-----

2d PRESIDENT.  
That cannot be.

3d PRESIDENT.  
I have a voice to give.

2d PRESIDENT.  
I add mine to it.

3d PRESIDENT.  
If then persuasion fails-----we must insist,  
That votes decide this question.

Old AUMELE.  
You are too absolute;  
I cou'd consent to any thing but this:  
Yet, this-----if it must be-----my lord-----I yield.

VAL-

# FILIAL PIETY.

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VALDORE.

I thank your hard concurrence.

Old AUMELE.

Break up the court.

[The court rises.

[Exeunt, all but VALDORE and servant.

VALDORE.

I'll follow instantly.-----

LE FER.

LE FER.

My lord.

VALDORE.

What didst thou think, but now, of young CHALONS;  
How did his conduct strike thee?

LE FER.

With due wonder; and so did brave LA FOY's.

VALDORE.

Fye, fye; he's faulty.-----

What ready money have I unassign'd?

LE FER.

Enough for every use your wish can form.

VALDORE.

'Tis well.-----I'm wounded, when the brave feel pain:

Some call this weakness-----Heav'n turn their hearts.

The filial piety of young CHALONS, demands reward

Beyond our admiration.-----

Methinks from his example----low mankind,

Shou'd rise in body's scorn----for taste of mind;

Fly the coarse dross, that weighs down virtue's claim;

Stretch for futurity----and grapple fame.

[Exeunt omnes.

*End of the first Act.*

C 2

ACT



ACT II. SCENE I.

A PRISON.

GOALER and LE FER.

GOALER.

SO ripe a judgment, at an age so young;  
'Tis wonderful!

LE FER.

Religious----tho' a soldier!

GOALER.

That still is more a wonder!----So to quit,  
In the strong tide of youth, his flowing fortune;  
Drop his own living taste of joy's full feast,  
To give his father's dead remains a grave,  
Seems something that exceeds the bounds of faith.

LE FER.

It makes a golden precedent indeed!  
It teaches piety a bright, new road,  
To reach perfection by a shorter cut.

GOALER.

What is his age?

LE FER.

Scarce three and twenty years. I remember  
When first he serv'd unhappy Burgundy,  
Under his more unhappy father's wing;  
Where serving and commanding, he learn'd both,  
With such a ready fire and temper mix'd,  
That sometimes he appear'd his father's father;  
And never less, than our great captain's son.

GOALER.

Look, where he comes; and see his friend, LA FOY,  
Waiting the father's corps, the son has freed,  
Now moving to its last, long prison's cell.

*Enter*



*Enter Funeral, attend by* CHALONS, LA FOY, &c.

LA FOY.

How like a silent stream, by night's dark brow  
O'er-shaded, gliding under still cold showers,  
Moves the slow march of that sad solemn train!  
Tears, sighs, and mournful black, but paint woe's face,  
Within lies all the depth that drowns distress.

CHALONS.

Stay, friends, a moment-----while a wretch, deny'd  
To bear due murmurs to the cave of death,  
Bounds here his hollow groans. Rest, rest awhile.

*[To the bearers, who set down the bierse.]*

Oh! hail; for ever hail! dear reverend shade!  
Adieu, ye lov'd remains of that bless'd form,  
Who gave a nation rest-----and lost his own!  
Cruel extent of proof, that he who toils  
To serve (mistaken thought) the publick cause,  
Works for a fleeting shadow, that but seems  
To wear a tempting shape-----a dream, and fades.  
Here stands thy poor executor-----thy son;  
More proud a captive, thus thy bierse to free,  
Than when he fought thy cause, and shar'd its fame.  
Of all the thousands thou hast serv'd and sav'd,  
These only cou'd remember. These dear few,  
Remember well-----for they forget not gratitude.  
I thank you-----and I wish I cou'd reward;  
'Tis the last friendly aid you lend his love.  
His native land, like an unnatural mother,  
Not only has devour'd the worth she bore,  
But blots it from her memory's blank record;  
Leaving thy heir (great stain of want!) so poor,  
He cannot buy thee one sad humble stone,  
To mark its only spot exempt from shame.

*[Observes the soldiers weep.]*

Alas! the mournful scene's not wholly mine!  
The honest soldiers weep!-----LA FOY too weeps!  
Oh, heaven! behold a miracle of virtue,  
The very goaler weeps!-----And look, LA FOY,

The

The plaintiff crocodiles themselves shed tears !

Nay, then----my father's bones shall need no tomb :

Be these his body's balm ; these drops, more hard

'Than Idumean flints, on sun-burnt plains !

*[Creditors seem to weep.]*

LA FOY.

Away, ye sniv'ling rogues ! nor mix prophane

The dry-drawn tribute of a whine like yours,

With rites of heart-felt sorrow----Howl not here :

Strain your squeez'd eye-strings 'till they crack, for pain ;

Ne'er shall one generous dew-drop start, for virtue.

PRIEST.

On with the procession.

CHALONS.

Hold----Yet hold----

But, 'till in presence of his honour's hearse,

I struggle 'till I find a few poor legacies.

*[To a soldier]* Come hither, generous soldier----Wear this ring ;

'Twill, when thou seest it, bid thy valour glow

Distinguish'd as thy pity.

Thou, good friend, *[To another]*

Cross thy afflicted manly breast shall bind

This scarf----and doubly dye the warlike crimson.

*[To the bearers]* You, gentle bearers of the noblest load,

That e'er press'd willing shoulders, take this purse ;

Divide its little all----For thee, LA FOY,

Poor as thou think'st thy friend, I've gold yet left :

Take thou this medal ; wear it for his sake

Who knew thy worth, and lov'd it.

And now my wants and wealth are ended all :

Now----bleak, inhospitable world, farewell ;

Darkness will, gratis, in my silent cell

Furnish an unbought shelter----Life's short storm

Blown over, I once more shall meet my father.

'Till then----Tears speak the rest.

*[Weeps]*

LA FOY.

On----on----he shakes me.

*Funeral*

*Funeral proceeds.*

1st CREDITOR.

No farther.---[*Stopping* CHALONS.] A Goaler, at your peril,  
keep him.

What! squander our estate before our faces!

GOALER.

Sir-----Please you to return?

2d CREDITOR.

Please!-----He shall please.

Come, every little helps-----and money's money.

CHALONS.

Dear, venerable earth!-----Adieu, for ever!

[*Goes in.*]

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

## SCENE II.

A CHAMBER in VALDORE's House.

*Enter AMELIA and FLORELLA.*

AMELIA.

Your story of CHALONS has greatly mov'd me.

If AUMELE touch'd my thoughts, 'twas partial folly;

Yet 'twas not love, 'twas duty; since my father

Pointed his lightness out, not warn'd me from it.

FLORELLA.

AUMELE is light, deceitful, loose, ignoble;

Loves every face, is every woman's claim,

And she who first believes, is first undone.

His very friendship's false-----Himself, whom only

He wishes not to cheat, he cheats the most.

He courts you for a mistress, not a wife.

AMELIA.

No more-----I hear him with suspecting hope;

And doubt, I shou'd not trust him.

FLORELLA.

Still 'tis thus!-----

Woman, by nature form'd to be undone,

Of fees, yet helps the treason she wou'd shun.

*Enter.*



*Enter Young AUMELE.*

AMELIA.

Hush, good FLORELLA----hush----No more----He comes!  
The gay, the witty, cou'd I add the just,  
AUMELE were all the maid belov'd cou'd wish. [*Exit FLORELLA*]

AUMELE.

Lov'liest AMELIA; if, before my hour,  
I break on your retirement, thank your charms.  
Love has its wing'd desires, when beauty calls,----  
Sweeter than spring! than summer's sun more awful!  
Yet colder than the winter's starry nights!  
Say, how much longer will that frozen heart  
Resist the warmth it gives me?

AMELIA.

Gay AUMELE!----  
Lovers make light complaints, who love like you,  
Too well you guess the father must prevail,  
Where daughters, by their duty, guide their choice:  
You know my heart admits no wavering flame.

AUMELE.

Cou'd gifts of empty air enrich my claim,  
How wealthy had you made me!----Still look angel,  
But more like woman love----Meet flame with flame.

AMELIA.

Has not my father's will pronounc'd me yours?

AUMELE.

True----But methinks he gave what was not his:  
Your lover's pride wou'd owe you to yourself.  
Whate'er you to a father's orders yield,  
Proves your obedience, but it proves not love:  
The surest test of love is confidence.

AMELIA.

She gives without reserve, who gives up all.

AUMELE.

Manner, in miser's deeds, destroys their bounty:  
Bonds they insist on----first----then pinch out gold;  
While the true friend tells fast, and trusts repay.

AMELIA.

AMELIA.

I understand you not.

AUMELE.

Had you but love,  
Then cou'd you soon-----

AMELIA.

What mean you ?

AUMELE.

Credit mine-----

But your calm, patient passion waits dull form ;  
Asks holy mortgage----to insure captivity,  
And doubts if honour's ties can bind like priests.

AMELIA.

How !-----For thy honour, shou'd I part with mine ?  
Fain wou'd I think less foully of AUMELE,  
Than once to fear he dares design my ruin.

AUMELE.

Thy ruin !-----No, thy happiness he courts-----  
Wou'd crown AMELIA empress of his soul,  
Not warden of his body-----See her reign  
Sovereign, by free-born choice, with generous sway,  
Safely surrounded with thy guard of charms.  
What need---what use---of yeoman duty's aid ?

AMELIA.

What wou'dst thou dare ?-----

AUMELE.

Why-----'Tis unjust, my love,  
To treat our queens, like slaves-----Weigh marriage rightly,  
You'll find it humbling fierce, tumultuous joy,  
Concurrent wills, and elegant desires ;  
Made cold, and lifeless all---because compell'd.

AMELIA.

Oh, heaven ! begone for ever from my sight ;  
Nor dare to blast my name, from this black moment,  
With breath more baneful than the viper's hiss !  
If, in some softer hour's unguarded faith,  
Trustful I listen'd, and half hop'd thee just ;  
Spight of thy known, thy dreaded lightness, heard thee-----  
Punish me, angry powers, when I forgive thee !

D

AUMELE.

AUMELE.

Have frowns such charms! why heaves that snowy bosom,  
Unform'd for any sighs, but those of love?

*[Forcing her hand, and embraces her-----*

*She puts him aside.*

Change 'em for fiercer transports, yet unknown:  
Soft murmurs----stifled whispers----throbbing heart----  
Eyes mixing angry fear, with fond desires;  
Earnest of joy too violent to last,  
And kindly made too short, lest bliss might kill.

*[After struggling, she breaks from him.*

AMELIA.

Unhand me, villain! traitor, fly this moment!  
O! that the eyes thou wrong'st, cou'd look thee dead!  
The curs'd hyæna's wily cry----false tears  
Of crocodiles----All, all that's fatal, dire,  
Destructive to our sex----all meet in thee!  
No, base AUMELE----once passion did but pause----  
This insult on my honour ends it all:  
I'd sooner----But begone----'tis guilt to see thee;  
But, to hold converse with thee, blots my fame. *[Going.*

AUMELE.

Hear yet one humble word-----

AMELIA.

When next I do,  
Then curse me every power that hates not virtue.

*[Going, meets her father entering.*

My father!----Sure he has not been a witness  
To this man's daring perfidy!

*Enter VALDORE.*

VALDORE.

AMELIA!-----

Young lord, allow me to expect your pardon, *[To AUMELE.*  
That business of importance calls my daughter.

AUMELE.

I humbly take my leave.

*[Exit bowing.*

*[VALDORE sees him to the door, and returns.*

VALDORE.



# FILIAL PIETY.

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VALDORE.

Why look you sad, AMELIA?

AMELIA.

I was mov'd,  
By news my woman brought me of this fame,  
From great and generous praise, that crowns CHALONS.

VALDORE.

Kind heav'n prepar'd that thought to suit my purpose.  
Thy duty ever met thy father's will;  
And, as thou know'st I will but for thy good,  
I have no cause to doubt thy wish'd obedience.

AMELIA.

Sir, I am yours-----so wholly, that my heart  
Unhesitating hears-----when you command.

VALDORE.

To say I love thee, were too short-----Thou art  
My age's only comfort-----my soul's joy-----  
My hope for future time-----my pride in this.

AMELIA.

Wou'd I had merit, sir, to make this justice.

VALDORE.

I thought, AMELIA, at my entrance here,  
I saw thee mov'd to anger?

AMELIA:

Oh! my heart!

[*Aside.*

VALDORE.

AUMELE was with thee-----As I know him vain,  
I fear some lightness shook thee!

AMELIA.

Me! my lord!

VALDORE.

Sprung from a brutal stem, himself more brutal,  
I now, too late, repent I bade thee love him.  
Too conscious of his father's power, I poorly  
Barter'd my love of truth, for earth's proud views;  
And heaven resentful, has resolv'd to blast 'em.  
To him, this morning, I surrender'd up  
A power, his schemes insidious long had cross'd:

D 2

But,

28 *The INSOLVENT: OR,*

But, by his conduct in CHALONS' just cause,  
New shock'd by savage proof of flinty nature,  
He wak'd me into detestation, due  
To his whole impious race, and stop thy ruin.

AMELIA.

Alas ! my lord, far happier had I been,  
Never to have indulg'd a list'ning ear.  
Unapprehensive innocence, in maids,  
Weighs man by its own meanings.

VALDORE.

Wary maids-----

AMELIA.

Alas ! there are no such, when love reigns lord.  
Ah ! what, if in obedience to your orders,  
I shou'd have given my heart, where you assign'd it ?  
Think to what misery then my duty dragg'd me ;  
Passions new-born, at first are in our power ;  
But, when their tide runs strong, they sweep resolves.

VALDORE.

Away-----Ere yet the priest has join'd your hands,  
To trust your passion's range beyond your power,  
Were treason against honour----If 'tis so,  
Recal it, while you can : You are too wise  
To doat, AMELIA, on a youth so weightless.  
The solid-lover guards his favourer's fame,  
Which the fool's whole with'd joy but seeks to sully.  
Boasters of frothy soul, when young, like this,  
So little too inform'd by manly virtue,  
Blast, like a basilisk, each fair they look on :  
Loud, among lewd companions, wildly cruel,  
Each but compares with each his list of conquests,  
And he's most hero, who has ruin'd most.

AMELIA.

And is AUMEL of taste deprav'd like this ?

VALDORE.

Name him no more-----I, whose mistaken hand  
Brought malady, will also bring the cure.  
CHALONS, the brave CHALONS, shall claim thy heart,

And

And prize it to its value. Smile, AMELIA;  
 CHALONS, that mov'd thy praise, deserves thy pity.  
 CHALONS has ev'ry worth should charm a woman;  
 A mind exalted, like a fancied god!  
 Judge it, by what thou'st heard of his dead father.  
 Example never reach'd it----It has fir'd  
 My blood to sense of transport!----Give him then  
 Your wonder and your love.

AMELIA.

He has my wonder! has my heart's applause;  
 But, for its tenderness, 'tis scarce my own!

VALDORE.

Peace, AMELIA,  
 Left thou shou'dst lead me to believe----But----no----  
 AUMELE had ne'er the power to wound thy honour;  
 I cannot then suspect thy heart admits him.  
 Is that a man to move a lady's wish?  
 Light rival of her sexes emptiest arts,  
 The toilet and the ball-room are his fields----  
 Thence rise his trophies----There expands his fame.

AMELIA.

Yet, once, you thought him worthiest of my love.

VALDORE.

How careful shou'd men be to weigh resolves!  
 Push thought to consequence, and take in fear!  
 Else comes reproach, let loose---for ever ours.  
 I charge you, on my blessing, shun AUMELE;  
 And view CHALONS as one that claims your love.

Enter LE FER.

LE FER.

LA FOY, my lord, attends.

[Exit.

VALDORE.

AMELIA-----you may now  
 Retire, to suit your wish to my command;  
 Or bear the weight of a wrong'd father's curse,  
 And live a stranger to me.

AMELIA.

Oh! fir!-----Oh! father!

[Kneeling.

VALDORE.



VALDORE.

Away----I will not hear thee!----Go----Obey!

[Exit AMELIA, weeping.]

Enter LA FOY.

VALDORE.

I wish'd to see you, sir, for your own sake;  
 'Twas to lend counsel to your iron rashness:  
 Love of your bravery forc'd me to esteem you.  
 Haste, and submit yourself to warm AUMELE.  
 Weigh your too bold contempt of a court's power,  
 And deprecate its vengeance.

LA FOY.

When I do----  
 May my tongue rot.----My lord, you know not me.  
 Submit, and crave forgiveness of a brute!  
 What tho' his wealth were equal to a monarch's?  
 Nay, tho' himself a monarch (as his pride  
 Out-monarch's his crown'd master's) let me die  
 The death his baseness merits, ere once stoop  
 To think commission'd brutes are less than monsters.  
 Does he not use his power to crush the needy?  
 Oppress the foldier, scholar, all desert?  
 Nay, wrong'd he not the marshal!----Nature form'd  
 This loath'd, wry mouth of law, to scare mankind,  
 By scorn of ugly vice, to love of virtue!  
 How savagely the brute blasphemer spoke  
 Of the dead general!----Ask him forgiveness!  
 First let me perish law-struck----A judge!----A dog!  
 How he insulted o'er the brave man's memory!  
 Perdition seize him for't!----I weep to think on't!

VALDORE.

I was to blame  
 To yield my place too blindly----But, perhaps,  
 'Tis practicable to retrieve that error.----  
 Sir, give not way to passion.

LA FOY.

I weep not when I fight----But, pardon me,  
 I melt because too weak to check oppression.

Whene'er

# FILIAL PIETY. 31

Where'er I think of the vile injuries,  
The bold black injuries done my worthy master,  
I cou'd devour him piece-meal.

VALDORE.

Pray be temperate-----  
I but advise your frenzy----not constrain :  
Opinion is as free as air----and they  
Who err in power, are least exempt from censure.

*Enter* LE FER.

LE FER.

The creditors attend with count CHALONS.

VALDORE.

Pay those hard men their claims----Wait the count in.  
Please you, LA FOY, to witness their receipts,  
And take their full releases----What but now  
I said, meant nothing----'Twas this call  
Detain'd you for their coming----What you'll see  
Will more explain my purpose.

LA FOY.

What I hear alarms my love and wonder.

LE FER.

This way, sir.

[*Exit* LE FER and LA FOY.]

*Enter* CHALONS, *wiping his eyes and melancholy.*

VALDORE *meets him.*

VALDORE.

Brave sir, you are most welcome.-----Fye ! be hush'd,  
You have out wept a woman !----Noble CHALONS !  
No man that lives but has a father lost,  
Or once must lose a father.

CHALONS.

Sir, 'tis true.-----

I never thought my father was immortal ;  
But as I pass'd your hall, his reverend picture  
Smil'd on my startled eye, and forc'd some tears.

VALDORE.

My lord----I lov'd your father----and wou'd wish  
One favour from his son.

CHALONS.

CHALONS.

Of me----a favour!  
What has he left to grant, who wants his liberty?

VALDORE.

The liberty you think you want, is yours.  
The rich man that beholds the brave in chains,  
And pants not for his freedom, is a slave.  
Jewels or gold, what'er your wants require,  
Take all that I possess, and end restraint.  
You look amazement.

CHALONS.

Nay, I am amaz'd!  
You cannot mock distress----Natures, like yours,  
Call feign'd compassion insult. But your virtue  
Shall wonder, in its turn----for I'll not tax  
Your bounty for myself----But beg release  
(In my forgotten stead) of poor LA FOY.

*Enter LA FOY.*

VALDORE.

See what a power the prayers of good men hold!  
I give him to your friendship----and to his  
I join your own due freedom----Live and love.  
Your father's debts discharg'd, his name shines free.

LA FOY.

'Tis an astonishing, yet sacred truth!  
I come from witnessing the generous deed----  
See here, your own discharge.

CHALONS.

Honour'd VALDORE!----[*Pauses.*] But words won'd wrong  
my meaning.

Dumb be my tongue, while blushes only speak----  
All language is too light, for deeds like these!

VALDORE.

Wou'd you requite 'em, count?

LA FOY.

Command his life----

And, if one serves not; throw in mine, my lord.

[CHALONS stands struck with silent attention.]

VALDORE.



# FILIAL PIETY.

33

VALDORE.

I have an only child, her mother's likeness,  
Care of my life, and comfort of my years!  
I stand so near the brink of time's dark stream,  
That soon in course I must drop in, and die:  
Fain wou'd I first provide a guard more strong  
For my AMELIA's youth, than age like mine.  
Her birth perhaps less splendid, match'd with yours,  
Yet worthy noblest notice. Take her, then,  
And with her all my fortune----Call her wife.  
'Thank me, by loving her; 'tis all the gratitude  
My hopes, from brave CHALONS, can bear to claim.

CHALONS.

Oh! what delightful payments you exact,  
When you thus plunge me deeper far in debt!  
Now, not my life's last toils can ever pay you.  
She were, without a dower, a prince's prize;  
How greatly then too rich, too dear, for me!

VALDORE.

Is it resolv'd then?

CHALONS.

Sir----I have lov'd her long---  
Despairing (lost in fortune's clouds) to gain her.  
Her beauty is the boast of Burgundy;  
Her father is VALDORE!----There honour strikes  
Perfection's proudest point---and joy stands dumb.  
Heav'n grant her generous will but pleas'd as mine,  
And ere the sun yet sets---his day's a year.

VALDORE.

Enough, I answer for her willing duty.  
She wants no sense of that----and knows your worth.  
This day shall smile on my compleated wish.

CHALONS.

'Tis more than love's stretch'd arrogance of hope  
Durst promise my desires. Oh, sir! I groan  
Beneath such added weight of benefit!  
You, CURTIUS like, have cast into the gulph  
Of our sunk Burgundy's ungrateful shame,  
Your fame and fortune, to redeem her name.

E

VALDORE.

## The INSOLVENT: Or,

VALDORE.

Fortune's an empty well----and hoards but air,  
 'Till use lends weight to wealth----and taste to care:  
 Then shine the rich man's joys----when shar'd they flow;  
 He that won'd well possess, must wide bestow.

[Exeunt omnes.]

End of the second Act.



ACT

# FILIAL PIETY.

33



## ACT III. SCENE I.

A GARDEN, *belonging to VALDORE's House.*

*On one side, FLORELLA and AUMELE discover'd, talking earnestly: On the other, enter BELGARD.*

BELGARD.

SO! he has lodg'd me here, for his old purpose.  
How base are these employments!----I'll forsake him.  
Thinks he, because I owe his father's purse  
My poor subsistence, I but eat to sin!  
From this close conference, and that low voice,  
The new bride's faithless maid, or I guess wrong,  
Betrays some trusted secret.----Hark! he's louder.

AUMELE.

Well---grant that I advis'd the useful scheme,  
Which authoris'd thy crafty tongue to paint me  
In odious lights; that, seeming not my friend,  
Her caution shou'd not catch the least faint glimpse,  
That I had bought thy service; was you by that,  
Commission'd to betray me for another,  
And pay CHALONS the joys bespoke by me?

FLORELLA.

If you cou'd hear---I meant to do you service;  
Enrich you, by your loss---Never, 'till now,  
Was your hope likely---never near, 'till now.

AUMELE.

Thy fancy is all woman---Wind and feather!

FLORELLA.

Will you hear me?  
You say my lady's married---Thank heav'n for it,  
And feel the clue that guides you.---Track two footsteps;  
One o'er the trodden path of some hedg'd field,  
That tempts approach to bear it more, yet tells not:



The other cros cold lawns of shivering snow,  
 'Till then by mortal wanderer unimprinted,  
 Which of these two proclaims discovery soonest?  
 Shame on such shallow plotters!----When in love,  
 Int'rest, or treason, your he blunderer moves,  
 Without a woman's help, his wit destroys him.

AUMELE.

What am I to infer from this fine story?

FLORELLA.

Her marriage but invites her lover's hopes;  
 Unbars the door of doubt, fast lock'd by danger.  
 France, you well know, trusts wives with ample freedom;  
 And when these wives have maids---those maids good friends---  
 And those friends liberal hearts---What think you now?

AUMELE.

Provided she consented, this were easy.

FLORELLA.

Oh! there are arts----Consent or not consent:  
 In short, I know she loves you----Did you know  
 But half as well who serves your int'rest there,  
 You'd scorn to weigh how dear the hope may cost you.

AUMELE.

Nay, that's unjust reproach. Here's a new witness;

*[Gives her a purse.]*

I want no grateful will to note thy friendship:  
 If it succeeds, in this sweet view thou shew'st me,  
 Be richer than thy mistress.

FLORELLA.

See! I told you,  
 She shou'd walk there alone----pretend you fought her.

*[Exit FLORELLA.]*

BELGARD *comes forward.*

BELGARD.

So, sir! I see for what you dragg'd me hither.  
 Preferr'd to be your pander. Help to ruin  
 A fine young lady, form'd for love and piety.  
 That she cou'd ever fancy one so wicked!

AUMELE.

AUMELE.

No, no ; I brought thee but to take the air,  
Thy dull'd wit wanted fresh'ning : and besides,  
Thou hast a sword edg'd sharp, how blunt foe'er  
Thy surly virtue makes thee----Threat'nings, BELGARD,  
Threat'nings grow frequent, and these groves are solitary.  
What ! you want money now ? That makes you peevish.  
There--- *[Offers money.]*

BELGARD.

I scorn your money, sir ; nor will be bought  
To a base act. I shall acquaint your father.

AUMELE.

Aye, do ; he'll not believe thee----His own gambols  
Lay not my way, his loves have hard round faces ;  
And what men wish not theirs, they grudge not others.

BELGARD.

But will not law defend a lady's honour ?

AUMELE.

No, 'tis the lady's property : while so,  
What legal right has power to enter on it ?  
Grant it were stolen, (as yet, woes me, it is not)  
Then in comes law indeed, and makes good pen'worths  
In the rogues rents that robb'd it.---Ah, BELGARD !  
Had'st thou a kinsman judge----I'd say fin cheap ;  
But mum for that----So, cousin, go thy way :  
I'll think on thy advice, muse here awhile,  
And meet thee at the Vine, to hear more counsel,

BELGARD.

Adieu, then, if you're still thus obstinate ;  
The loss is but your own : henceforth, your father  
Shall hold my care excus'd for such a son ;  
And I'll renounce his help, or wake his caution.

*[Exit BELGARD.]*

AUMELE.

He went in pinch of time ; for yonder walks  
A saint, this blust'ring devil had scar'd from sin.  
He's born to spoil my markets.---I'll stand shaded.

*[AUMELE stands on one side.]*

*Enter*

Enter AMELIA and FLORELLA.

FLORELLA.

You know I never lik'd him ; if I had,  
Good faith, I might have laugh'd myself to pity :  
For, cou'd you see how like a love-sick mope,  
The poor, touch'd penitent, weeps, prays and curses,  
Forsaken tho' he is, you'd ne'er forget him.

AMELIA.

He has too much deserv'd the pain he suffers.

FLORELLA.

Wou'd you shun him ?  
Perhaps, for much he ever lov'd our grove,  
He may not yet have left it.---Look !---He's here.

AMELIA.

I charge you, stir not---Stay, and be a witness,  
If he dares speak---But sure he will not dare.  
Light chance lends slander oft to idle tongues,  
And innocence might suffer.

FLORELLA.

I will be near.

[Exit.

AUMELE approaches respectfully.

AUMELE.

Madam---forgive a trembling criminal ;  
Guilty---but greatly punish'd---that---thus---led,  
By chance---his conscious reverence of your power,  
Permits an awful anguish to approach you.

AMELIA.

Chance was unkind to both ; since neither's wish  
Cou'd have forecast a meeting, neither's reason  
Cou'd find pretence to justify.

AUMELE.

Oh ! my AMELIA !

AMELIA.

No, false AUMELE !---forget presumptuous freedom.  
While I was yet my own, I was not yours ;  
Less can I, when another's.

AUMELE.



AUMELE.

I was to blame---  
But you have punish'd adoration's warmth,  
As coldness shou'd be punish'd!

AMELIA,  
Guilty warmth,  
And adoration's transports never met.

AUMELE,  
Oh! had you seen my agony of soul,  
When, led by swift repentance, I return'd  
To throw me at your feet---But met your father,  
Alter'd like you---averse to ev'ry prayer,  
And all forgetful of his once kind wish,  
You wou'd have wept the misery you caus'd.  
Distracted with my love, rage, shame, despair,  
I loath'd my name, race, life; but, most, my crime,  
And hid me in your groves---to die absolv'd.

AMELIA,  
Your being here is adding to your crime:  
If truly penitent, offend no more.

AUMELE.

I wou'd have slept away some sense of pain,  
Made the cold earth my bed; and try'd all night,  
Moisten'd by midnight dews, to shut out shame;  
But busy fancy rais'd thy beauteous form  
(Distracting image!)---giving joy to him,  
Who reaps the harvest my curs'd folly sow'd.

AMELIA.

Be dumb---Begone---and never see me more;  
Honour demands it now, if justice did not.  
I can no more---I shou'd forget thee quite,  
But thy fault will not let me. Once I dreamt,  
And slumb'ring fancy shew'd thee gay, kind, honest;  
But, waking, 'twas no more.

AUMELE.

You wou'd forget me then?

AMELIA.

I must, and will forget thee.

AUMELE.

## The INSOLVENT: Or,

AUMELE.

If it must be----'tis best I take my leave :  
He cannot die too soon, who lives for scorn.

AMELIA.

I do not wish your death ; but go---for ever.

AUMELE.

For ever is a dismal sound, AMELIA !  
Wou'd it be more than pity might allow,  
Since all my crime, bold as it was, was love,  
To grant one last----soft----trembling----distant touch,  
[Takes her hand to kiss it. She draws it back again.  
Of this dear hand----that shuns me ? 'Twas too much ;  
'Twas extasy too great for one condemn'd.

AMELIA.

Begone, AUMELE !

AUMELE.

Grant one nearer rapture---- [Takes her hand again.  
And it shall dwell so sweetly on my thought,  
That memory shall admit no sad idea.  
This last permitted transport, and I go. [Kisses her hand.

*Enter LA FOY, at a distance, and starts.*

Yet, since I never am to see you more,  
You will not, must not, think despair grows bold,  
If I thus force one warmer, dearer draught,  
From these press'd lips, to cool my feverish soul.

[Struggling, he kisses her.

AMELIA.

Leave me, presumptuous, grief-struck madman,  
Leave me.

AUMELE.

I wou'd----but 'tis impossible.

LA FOY.

Sure 'tis a vision.----

[Draws his sword.

Draw, ruffian, or thou dy'st.

[AUMELE retreats fighting in confusion, follow'd  
out by LA FOY.

AMELIA.

# FILIAL PIETY. 41

AMELIA.

FLORELLA-----where?-----Oh! wretched, lost AMELIA!  
 This only wanted to compleat thy woe.  
 My fame's fair promise, my white name, is lost.  
 Blood too must follow.-----Innocence, in vain,  
 Will now appeal to truth's distrustful aid,  
 And I am black as guilt-----indulging none.

[Exit, in disorder.]

*Enter LA FOY, putting up his sword.*

LA FOY.

Light as the robber's purpose was his foot,  
 And he has 'scap'd my vengeance. Now I'm cool,  
 Let me reflect.----I'm glad of his escape,  
 His death had broad proclaim'd her now hid shame,  
 What shall I do? Shall I conceal or tell it?  
 Something I must resolve, nor injure friendship.  
 Had she been well inclin'd---To keep her cautious,  
 Her secret shou'd be kept---But---She's a woman;  
 And who can stem their passions? To surmount  
 Her sex's rage of heart beneath restraint,  
 Is harder than to prop a falling tower.

*Enter VALDORE.*

VALDORE.

Good morning, my LA FOY.

LA FOY.

My lord, good morrow.

[*Aside.*] How if I break it to him? He is wise,  
 And his authority will give due weight  
 And warrant to his counsels.----  
 It shall be so.

VALDORE.

'Tis an inspiring sun---and the day shines;  
 Good omen to your friend's beginning joys.

LA FOY.

Yes, the air's hot---I wish it had been pure.

VALDORE.

I never heard it merited that censure.

F

LA



*The* INSOLVENT: Or,

LA FOY.

Some climes change fast, my lord.

VALDORE.

I pray, be plain.

LA FOY.

I stand engag'd for such unbounded favour,  
That 'twere to be ungrateful to be dumb,  
On what concerns your honour.

VALDORE.

Honour!----How?

LA FOY.

Serious and pensive in my morning's walk,  
Led through these covering groves and hid between 'em,  
I saw your daughter and AUMELE----

VALDORE.

How, saw 'em?

LA FOY.

Close as the grove they kiss'd in.

VALDORE.

Kiss'd in, soldier!

LA FOY.

Faith, I'm no orator;  
Knew I a word more kind than kiss, you'd had it.

VALDORE.

I hope you saw no guilt, beyond that promise.

LA FOY.

She struggl'd, and he press'd her; she struggl'd on,  
And he press'd closer. 'Twas no more than woman  
Can all, by nature, do as well as she did.

VALDORE.

I must inform you, sir, my daughter's modesty  
Discredits this bold tale, that stains her virtue.  
I know not from what quarter to suspect,  
Unless some hatred of AUMELE's light race,  
Propell'd you to accuse him. If 'twas so,  
'Tis an ungenerous anger; that, for vengeance  
'Gainst an offending foe, forgets the friend.  
I will, however, hold a watchful eye

O'er

# FILIAL PIETY.

43

O'er her examin'd conduct; and mean while  
Trust, and demand your silence.

[Exit VALDORE, angrily.]

LA FOY.

Curse on my wayward fate that sent me here,  
To interrupt their loves---It was ill-breeding.  
Some soft, cool wit, whom love more warm'd than friendship,  
Had past it o'er, or forwarded the business;  
So wisely gain'd good will---and pleas'd 'em all.

Enter CHALONS.

CHALONS.

Muttering alone, LA FOY? what fretful scheme,  
What melancholy rage of honest heart,  
Disturbs thy spleen thus early? Prythee brighten;  
Since fortune smiles at last---for shame, smile with her.  
If thou'rt untouch'd within, and know'st no joys  
Thy own---let mine inspire thy sullen temper.

LA FOY.

Yes---that's a wise man's plot---Thy joys disturb me.

CHALONS.

Thou art too good for envy? What then moves thee?  
How can a happiness, like mine, distress thee?  
Married to beauty---reconcil'd to hope;  
Splendid in riches---in thy friendship happy;  
And blest by fame and love---what want I more?

LA FOY.

One thing I'm sure you want.

CHALONS.

What's that?

LA FOY.

Distrust  
Of woman's wavering love.

CHALONS.

Nay, now thou'rt cynical:  
Merits my wife no trust?

LA FOY.

Aye---trust her on.

As to myself, I feel no pain from woman:

'Twas for your sake, I found one not quite angel.

F 2

CHALONS.

CHALONS.

For my sake !----Be explicit in thy charge,  
And ease my heart's new anguish.

LA FOY.

No----rest it here ;  
You are too young a lover----Ill prepar'd  
For proofs your faith will start from ; 'twill unman you,

CHALONS.

What can'st thou mean ?

LA FOY.

Why shou'd I pull down plagues ?  
Why should I strike diseases through thy bones,  
Beyond the cure of medicine----Scorch thy blood ;  
Rob thy torn hours of peace----and send in pain ?  
Better continue blind, than see but misery.

CHALONS.

Thou strik'st a deadly coldness to my heart.  
Point out this foe to life ; that, like a man,  
I may subdue, or bear it. Am I not,  
(Cruel LA FOY ! ) was I not bred----a soldier ?  
If it be fate, I'll meet it----If but a fault  
That cankers on my mind, I'll cut it off,  
Or cure it by my reason. Thus adjur'd,  
If you continue dumb, you doubt my courage,

LA FOY.

I've heard that married men find friends in heav'n ;  
You shou'd have many there----Pray their kind guard  
To keep your fair wife chaste.

[Is going.

CHALONS.

Stay----what said'st thou ?  
Take this devouring wolf out of my breast,  
Stay----or for ever lose me.

LA FOY.

Nay----I but go,  
Lest I should lose thee.

CHALONS.

Have a care thou dost not ;  
Thou hast inflam'd me now----and I will have it.

LA



# FILIAL PIETY. 45

LA FOY.

Nay-----be content-----thou hast it.

CHALONS.

Death and hell !

Hast it !-----what have I ?

LA FOY.

Why a fine young wife.

How can I help it, if she too has claims,

Beyond all rights allow'd her.

CHALONS.

Rights ! claims !-----Furies !

Speak plainly, or thou dy'st.

LA FOY.

Why there 'tis, now !

Was it my fault, that I don't like her kissing

The son of your wrong'd father's mortal enemy ?

CHALONS.

Nay, then-----the world has no fix'd honour in't ;

And he whom most I lov'd, is most a villain.

LA FOY.

Hark-----my hot child ! villain's a wrong, bad word ;

Use it no more-----or, if agen thou speak'st,

Think twice, who hears-----and let no name denote him.

CHALONS.

Nature and name thy own-----Hear it to heav'n,

Ye faints, that waste no prayer for falsehood damn'd ;

Hear it, ye winds, and blow it through his ear,

'Till his heart shrinks to feel it-----that LA FOY,

His friend's belyar, his stain'd sword's disgracer,

Envies superior bliss-----and is a villain.

LA FOY.

Madman, be dumb for ever. Thou hast shrunk

Indeed my feeling heart, and pour'd in horror.

[Drawing.] Look here-----behold this sword-----bright as the  
truth

'Tis drawn for-----Never was it stain'd, 'till now ;

But, when it wears thy blood, 'twill blush for pity.

CHALONS.

Hold-----ere thy courage dares this desp'rate stake,

Throw

Throw not for life on the bad chance of guilt ;  
Own but thy falshood-----it shall stand forgiven.

LA FOY.

Wittal ! thy wife's a wanton-----That's truth ; keep falshood,  
She'll want it for her dowry.

CHALONS.

Oh ! my father !

This was your heart's try'd friend. You lov'd him long ;  
And, with your dying breath, you bad me love him !  
Now, from the grave that hides you from his guilt,  
If possibly those awful eyes pale beams  
Can pierce the marble vault-----Oh ! see me wrong'd,  
And groan reluctant licence to revenge it.

LA FOY.

Amen-----to that ; where the wrong lies, fall vengeance,  
[Offering the medal.] Here---ere I kill thee---take back what  
thou gav'st me.

Take all that bears thy virtuous father's image ;  
Take back this kiss-worn paper-----Shou'd thy sword  
Force a success thy crime's bad cause disclaims,  
'Twon'd, if I then retain'd that good man's gift,  
Seem drawn against thy father. Take it from me ;  
Tear it, and scatter it in air-----for ever ;  
So has thy rashness torn the love that bound us.

CHALONS.

What wou'd this paper teach me ?

LA FOY.

Teach thee-----nothing ;  
Distraction will not learn-----it shuns to hear.  
'Tis the dear, grateful oath he sign'd and gave me,  
On the victorious evening of a day,  
Thou dar'st not hear the name without a blush.  
When cover'd o'er with blood, from wounds ill earn'd,  
In thy unthank'd defence-----Then fall'n and hopeless,  
Half trampled into earth beneath the hoofs  
Of fiery VILEROY's barb'd iron squadron ;  
He snatch'd me to his breast-----bail'd my sword's labour.  
He wept, kind man ! wept tears of grateful joy-----  
Gave that seal'd, written oath, to pay me greatly ;

Or,

# FILIAL PIETY.

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Or, shou'd he die unable, leave th' oblig'd in charge,  
(I scorn to name him) bound himself to pay me.  
Well has he paid his father's vow !----Quick---tear it,  
Let not the bond upbraid thee. Cancel that,  
Since thou hast blotted me ; then, if I fall,  
The payment I declin'd in life---dies too.

CHALONS.

[*Drops his sword.*] Oh ! all ye blissful angels, who have seen me,  
What horror am I 'scap'd from !

LA FOY.

Raise thy fall'n point.

CHALONS.

Not for a thousand wrongs wou'd I resist thee.  
Perish th' unlist'ning rage of human pride,  
That burns up kind remembrance !----Wound me---kill me ;  
'Tis but to take your own---the life you sav'd me.  
Generous LA FOY !----brave hearts make room for pity ;  
Say but I'm pardon'd, and I'll dare look up,  
Meet thy offended eyes---and hear thee chide me.  
Why was love touch'd too roughly ?

LA FOY.

[*Putting up his sword.*] Did I ?----Faith,  
I half begin to doubt I was to blame----  
But 'twill be always thus in womens matters ;  
Clap one of those white make-bates 'twixt two pigeons,  
You turn 'em into vultures !

CHALONS.

You say strangely,  
My wife gave wanton freedoms, to the son  
Of my worst enemy ?----Sure 'twas impossible !

LA FOY.

Likely enough----We'll walk, and waste an hour  
On some fresh subject ; air our glowing bloods,  
'Till they grow cool as reason ; then resume  
That feathery theme, and find its weight anon.  
Think----have you mark'd no favour from her eye,  
When it survey'd AUMELE ?

CHALONS.

AUMELE has long  
Made boast of her attachment to his folly ;

But,



46 *The INSOLVENT: Or,*

But, as 'twas folly taught him to believe it,  
I charg'd it to his lightness.-----Yet-----'twas odd,  
When the priest join'd our hands, she dragg'd her's back,  
Trembling and cold; then rais'd it to her eyes,  
Cover'd an ill-tim'd tear, and sigh'd profound.  
Let me consider----- [Pauses.]

LA FOY.

Do; and this do further.  
If she has guilt, and you dare search it boldly,  
Trust my advice-----Make light of my grave jealousy;  
Laugh when you tell it her-----Call it the blunder  
Of an uncourtly taste, not broke to gallantry.  
I will contrive BELGARD, the honest hater  
Of AUMELE's shameless riots, shall be sent,  
As from his father, to require your presence  
For two whole days, to wait th' assembled states.  
Obey the summons with assum'd regret,  
Mourning such tedious absence. Then take leave,  
And go no farther than to BELGARD's brother's.  
But have a care-----women have subtle piercings;  
Kiss warm at parting-----closer-----longer-----kinder;  
Squeeze a more hard, blind lover's hug, than ever.

CHALONS.

I will.

LA FOY.

Then leave the rest to me.

CHALONS.

Oh! what a bliss might marriage hopes create,  
Were but its joys as permanent as great!

[Exeunt omnes.]

4 AP 54

*End of the third Act.*



A C T



ACT IV. SCENE I.

An ANTI-CHAMBER, in VALDORE'S House.

Enter FLORELLA and Young AUMELE.

FLORELLA.  
**Y**OU a young lover, and so near his mistress---  
 And she asleep too----and stand wisely doubting!  
 Go, and protect your fears within yon night-gown;  
 Then safely fill your absent rival's place.  
 Darkness can tell no tales----if rapture does not;  
 If you must speak, take care you don't too soon;  
 Wise women know, mistakes once past are helpless.

AUMELE.  
 But where's that sullen friend? Did he go with him?

FLORELLA.  
 No, no----The count's kind, undistrusting goodness,  
 Thank'd the rough soldier's too officious fight,  
 The husband's usual way----and check'd his error.

AUMELE.  
 Impossible!

FLORELLA.  
 What can be so to woman?----  
 Drown'd in due tears, and rack'd by strong despair,  
 Fled from the garden to her chamber's shelter,  
 She tore her hair, beat wild her beauteous bosom;  
 Curs'd ev'ry sleeping star, that watch'd not innocence;  
 Wounded the senseless floor with bleeding nails,  
 As if she plough'd up graves to cover shame.  
 Just in this tempest of ungovern'd rage,  
 In comes th' all-hushing husband; kiss'd her to stillness,  
 And every whirlwind's wing grew fledg'd with down;  
 Soft lent his head on her hard-heaving bosom,  
 While in an eager, doubt-dispell'd embrace,  
 He broke the chain of fear that held her dumb.

AUMELE.  
 No more of their embracing----pass that by.

G

FLORELLA.

FLORELLA.

He told her all the rough LA FOY's report,  
 But laugh'd at, while he told it----Generous spouse!  
 He scorn'd to see too clear----'twas wronging love!  
 Sorry he was (and there the jest grew pang-full)  
 That, for two endless ages----two----long----nights!  
 He must, that moment, leave her. All the rest  
 I have already told you; and thus near her,  
 I dare not trust, in my constraint of muscles,  
 To tell it o'er again---for I shall laugh;  
 Nay, laugh too loud----and if she wakes, all's over.

AUMELE.

By CUPID's dart,  
 I love thee for thy virtues! Thy keen rays  
 Of sparkling wantonness have fir'd my fancy,  
 And I could kiss thee into tenfold extasy!

*[Kisses her eagerly.]*

FLORELLA.

Psha! mind your business, my French man of straw;  
 Soon kindled, soon burnt out----The proverb knew ye.

AUMELE.

Well----thou shalt see I am a judge's son;  
 I will be stay'd, and reverend----But let me once  
 Catch thee behind the curtain of occasion,  
 And if there's judge or serjeant 'mongst 'em all  
 Makes sweeter use of darkness---I'm his client.  
 Heav'n save me! what a dreadful thought was that?

FLORELLA.

My lady and myself, alone inhabit  
 This right wing of the mansion---You may secure  
 Undress in the next chamber; two doors farther  
 You'll find your hope fast sleeping. Take the night-gown,  
 She'll dream the count return'd. Keep your voice under;  
 Short murm'ring's pass for eloquence in love.  
 Whisper, whene'er you give her breath for question,  
 That you receiv'd fresh orders, and return'd.

AUMELE.

Sweet oracle!---Hadst thou been born in Greece,  
 CUPID were king of Delphos. Here, eat gold---  
 Melt the whole purse.

*[Gives her a purse.]*

FLORELLA.



# FILIAL PIETY. 55

FLORELLA.

One hint more I'll give you----  
 When you succeed, triumphant in your scheme,  
 Own, in soft tumult, and with humblest joy,  
 The pleasing theft----Lest, ignorant of that,  
 She might blab secrets in a husband's ear,  
 Wou'd set his brains a madding. Timely warn'd,  
 She will be glad to bury what is past;  
 And for her own sake, or for yours, conceal it.

AUMELE.

No more, but trust me to my fate----Away;  
 I can no longer my fierce joys delay;  
 Too swiftly ended, with approaching day.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

*Enter LA FOY, softly.*

LA FOY.

By the count's master-key I've past three doors,  
 Yet fail to find this closet. 'Tis no matter,  
 I'm sure I've sprung my quarry----So there needs  
 No covert, from a game already started.  
 How shall I act? If I alarm the house,  
 And he once more escapes, VALDORE's blind trust,  
 In this chaste daughter's modesty, will break  
 His spleen with laughter----and conclude me mad.

*Enter CHALONS, pensive.*

Hark! there's some cautious step!----It must be he;  
 He enter'd with a view, that bids tread soft----  
 Guilt stands in need of silence. May this  
 Good sword and arm for ever fail me,  
 If he out-lives this meeting----

CHALONS.

Who is there?

LA FOY.

Shrink from thy horrid purpose, fatal sword:  
 Is not that voice CHALONS's?

CHALONS.

LA FOY!

LA FOY.

The same.  
 Speak softly----Why are you come hither, now?

**The INSOLVENT: Or,**

You promis'd to be patient, and expect  
'Till I return'd to call you.

**CHALONS.**

Is she innocent ?  
I glow with pain to wait that dear, wish'd news.  
I dare be sworn, you found her watchful virtue,  
Besieging heav'n with pray'rs for my return.  
How have you mark'd her busied ? All was hush'd,  
As through the private grot I pass'd unseen ;  
All was serene as peace. Still midnight nods,  
And nothing breathes in this lull'd house like guilt.

**LA FOY.**

I hope, all's well---and wish you wou'd begone.

**CHALONS.**

Begone first, self-tormenting jealousy !  
Thou dire camelion, that from air's each blast  
Catchest new colours---and deceiv'st to live !  
Honest LA FOY---'tis generous, as a god,  
To change hard hasty doom---and make it mercy.

**LA FOY.**

In mercy too, some stars I yet retain ;  
Remitted---but not our'd. Go---my heart bleeds,  
And shuns to tell thee more---Go hence, this moment.

**CHALONS.**

Nay, then there's fate !

**LA FOY.**

You'll make it fate, by staying.

**CHALONS.**

Answer me only this,

**LA FOY.**

Be brief---propose it.

**CHALONS.**

What have you seen---of what I dread to hear ?

**LA FOY.**

Best friend---Your sorrows make you doubly such.

**CHALONS.**

Go on ; I find then there is cause for sorrow.

**LA**

LA FOY.

Oh ! wou'd to heaven there was not. I have seen  
(Oppress'd by all thy miseries made my own,  
How can I tell thee) thy fond faith's misplac'd.  
I love thee more than ever ; for I add  
My pity to my friendship,----  
Thou must prepare thy honest heart for woe.  
Here, like a ghost that haunts its hidden treasure,  
With melancholy glide thou stalk'st along,  
Fond of the dirty earth thou tak'st for gold.

CHALONS.

If thou hast pity, torture me no longer.

LA FOY.

Scarce had I turn'd the corner of the street  
That fronts this fatal house----ere I beheld,  
Swift passing by me, muffled from their note,  
AMELIA's faithless-favourite maid, FLORELLA,  
And close behind her, as sin follows hard  
Upon temptation's heels, on stalk'd AUMELE.  
I saw 'em enter----Saw the door shut softly :  
Watch'd, 'till the lights extinguish'd shew'd all quiet ;  
Then follow'd, by the way you lately taught me.  
He's still within ; if you, without much noise,  
Search close, you'll find him closer. If he starts,  
I'll seize him at his out-shot.

CHALONS.

Give me thy sword.

LA FOY.

I'll keep it for your use----but not your folly.

CHALONS.

If you refuse it now, you stain my fame.

LA FOY.

You know I wear it, but to serve your cause ;  
Let me go with it, you command it freely.

CHALONS.

I shall be sham'd for ever, if thy rashness  
Denies to trust me with it.

LA



## The INSOLVENT: Or,

LA FOY.

So adjur'd,  
I am no more its master---Use it wisely.

CHALONS.

Go, and be safe then---by the way you came.  
Take my repentant thanks for all past goodness,

[Embracing LA FOY.]

And pardon your poor friend, that---once---he wrong'd you.  
Oh! my LA FOY, they who have soldier's hearts,  
Unmingled with the lover's, never felt  
The softning pangs of tenderness we suffer.  
Did you but know to what excess of joy  
I rais'd my foolish hope, from this lov'd woman,  
You wou'd forget my fault---and call it weakness.

LA FOY.

Before you let your passion loose once more,  
Take care it not deceives you. Heedfully  
Convince yourself of wrongs, we now but fear;  
And, above all, be mindful she's a woman.

CHALONS.

Yet once embrace me, dear, too kind LA FOY.  
If we must meet no more---tell the hard world  
My wrongs---and vindicate an injur'd name.

[Exit, as into the chamber.]

LA FOY.

I'll hover near, and hold attentive note  
On what may want prevention. Swords us'd rashly,  
May justify intrusion every where.  
I haunt no beauty's bed-chambers---Pray heav'n  
He finds not AUMELLE does,---I rais'd my voice  
Higher than prudence ton'd it, purposely  
To warn escape from danger.---Troth, this pain  
Wounds my poor friend, beyond the cause's claim:  
I cou'd half hate myself, for having given it.

[A noise of footsteps within.]

That's a new step, and near me; by its sound,  
'Tis from a different quarter.

Enter

## FILIAL PIETY.

22

*Enter FLORELLA, frightened.*

FLORELLA.

Sure ! I heard

Some noise !----and, if my fear deceiv'd me not,

The hum of busy voices. Now 'tis hush'd ;

And I almost dare hope, 'twas but the echo

Of the wind's hollow groan, through empty chambers.

I'll venture list'ning at the inner door ;

Left some alarm has reach'd them.

*[Passing near LA FOY, he seizes her.]*

LA FOY.

Who art thou,

That thus, in dead of night, with robber's tread,

Steal'st to some purpos'd scene of frightened guilt ?

FLORELLA.

Say rather, what presuming ruffian's grasp,

With-holds me from my duty ?----Who, or what thou

May't be, my trembling heart wants power to guess.

LA FOY.

I know thy raven's croak.

FLORELLA.

I am call'd FLORELLA ;

Attendant on the countess of CHALONS.

LA FOY.

Thou art the brib'd she-baw'd that led AUMELE,

Hopeful of livelier pastime, to the sword,

That his vain penitence and punish'd vanity

Have fail'd to save his youth from.

FLORELLA.

Heav'n forbid !

Alas ! is AUMELE dead ?

LA FOY.

How dar'st thou doubt it ?

FLORELLA.

Who murder'd him ?

LA FOY.

Say, 'twas LA FOY.

FLORELLA.



# The INSOLVENT: Or,

FLORELLA.

I knew  
Thy voice, but too, too well.

LA FOY.

Thou'rt come to die;  
I waited but 'till heav'n's just anger sent thee,  
For thou art doom'd to follow.

FLORELLA.

Oh! for pity!  
Spare my defenceless life. I will kneel, weep,  
Beg mercy undeserv'd---and tell thee all.

LA FOY.

Has the unhappy countess e'er before  
Been guilty with AUMELE?

FLORELLA.

No---by my soul!  
Nor is she guilty now.

LA FOY.

Play'st thou at riddles?

FLORELLA.

Hark! what's that frightful noise! I hear clash'd swords,  
And die with apprehension.

LA FOY.

Go---I want leisure,  
But shall examine further. Do but prove  
Thy lady innocent, and claim some pity.  
Which is the count's gilt closet?

FLORELLA.

See it there.

LA FOY.

I have the key---In---enter---and be safe,  
Lock'd from escape or danger; 'till I ripen  
The growing distant hope, that may release thee.

[Shuts her in the closet. Takes the key, and  
puts it in his pocket.

And now, forgetful of all forms, I rush  
To interpose prevention.  
Horrid hand!

[Is going---Starts.

Enter



*Enter CHALONS, his sword drawn and bloody.*

Eyes horrid ! mien confus'd----and that sword bloody,  
Make needful all enquiry.

CHALONS.

He is dead.

LA FOY.

Alas ! too sure you found him ! Oh, 'twas thoughtless !  
What will his father, what VALDORE, what law,  
Misjudging censure, and the publick tongue,  
What will the world and heav'n----conceive of this ?

CHALONS.

I did not kill him basely.

LA FOY.

Where is your wife ?

CHALONS.

I've given her to the winds----They'll blow her name  
Round the four borders of her country's scorn.

LA FOY.

Joyless CHALONS !----You kill'd him in her bed ?

CHALONS.

No, not in bed----I found him kneeling near it.  
He sigh'd, and kiss'd her hand with amorous boldness,  
Mutt'ring his transports o'er it. Oft, in vain,  
He try'd to interrupt her torrent rage  
Of agoniz'd reproach, and conscious shame.  
Cruel, unkind AUMELE ! I heard her say ;  
How can I see the sun, when day-break comes ?  
How meet my injur'd husband's dreaded eyes,  
My reverend father's tears, my friends disdain,  
The hoot of the light rabble's cutting scorn,  
And all the killing anguish I must owe thee ?  
Go----for if here, by some disastrous chance,  
Discover'd----'twill undo me. Patience bore it,  
Even to this madding length----'twas all it cou'd,  
And I was tame no longer.

LA FOY.

'Twas indeed  
Too much for injur'd excellence, like thine,  
To bear, from blind depravity of taste,  
That left to feed upon a boundless lawn,  
And brows'd on a dry common !

H

CHALONS.

Out, at once,  
 Burst my relentless rage. Swift step I to him,  
 Sending thy honest sword before----That ne'er,  
 'Till then, had arm'd a hand unworthy. Take,  
 I cry'd, regardless of the shrieks she rais'd,  
 Take a defence undue----protect thy vileness----  
 Nor let me basely kill, tho' basely wrong'd.  
 He rose----leap'd back, and wonder'd----Paus'd, stood dumb,  
 And, for awhile, declin'd his urg'd defence.  
 "I should not," he began----and purpos'd more,  
 "In such a cause as this"----I stopp'd him short----  
 Pour'd in reproach, and rous'd him into firmness.  
 He, in his turn, grew hot----came fiercely on----  
 Met the vindictive point----Sigh'd loud, and fell.

LA FOY.

Trembling I ask---rash, violent CHALONS !  
 Ask with a friend's too apprehensive dread ;  
 Ask, since I must prepare my ear for anguish,  
 What follow'd this beginning ?----The offence  
 Was bitter----bitterer still th' offender's fate !  
 Oh, 'twas enough !----and ask'd no weak partaker.

CHALONS.

Ease that ungrounded pain----I cou'd not wound her.  
 Oh ! had'st thou seen, and heard, thou had'st not fear'd it.  
 Speechless with horror----wasting fruitless tears ;  
 Trembling, with force that shook the curtains round her ;  
 Wringing her hands, in half-rais'd attitude,  
 And bending o'er the bed, through night's pale gleam,  
 She mark'd the bleeding form, and eye'd it ghastly.  
 "Cruel, lost, shameless wanton !----Oh !" I cry'd,  
 "I want a name to speak thee !----Shou'd I kill thee,  
 "What marble heart of censure durst reproach me :  
 "But I remember what thou, wanton, did'st not ;  
 "And, for thy sex, I spare thee. Be this room  
 "Thy prison, 'till that venerable judge,  
 "Thy own shock'd father, sentence, or release thee."  
 There, as I turn'd to go, th' unhappy starter  
 Sprung from her pillow, caught my feet, and held 'em ;  
 Clung, like her beauty's influence, fast and painful ;  
 Hung her dragg'd weight on my retarded knees,

That,

# FILIAL PIETY.

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That, trembling, scarce sustain'd me. At the door,  
Fainting and hopeless, she relax'd her hold.  
I snatch'd th' afflicting moment, shook her from me;  
And, prison'd in her chamber, left her captive,  
Companion of a flatterer cold and dumb,  
And now grown tasteless of a lady's liking.

LA FOY.

Poor, poor AMELIA! what a fate is yours!  
How fall'n, from yester morning's awe-mix'd shine,  
Of white untainted beauty----Since 'tis thus,  
I must approve the sad appeal propos'd,  
To an impartial judge, at once, and father:  
His influence too, in your judicial process,  
Will balance, and 'twill all be needful there,  
The vengeance of a judge less just than he.

CHALONS.

Too generous, ill-rewarded, lov'd VALDORE!  
How shall my sick'ning soul find strength to meet him!  
I cannot----'Tis impossible.

LA FOY.

'Tis necessary:  
Leave to my care that melancholy duty;  
I'll bring him first prepar'd to stand the shock.

CHALONS.

But break not in on his too short repose;  
Shake not his unsuspecting heart abruptly;  
Wait 'till his usual hour of waking comes:  
'Twill be too soon, however long delay'd,  
To sigh such sorrows to him.

LA FOY.

I'll go listen.

[Exit.

CHALONS.

Oh what a change can one short hour bestow!  
To bury man's best hopes in endless woe!  
Beauty's frail bloom's a cheat! Valour's brief fame  
An empty sound----The shadow of a name!  
Riches are envy's bait----Scorn haunts the poor----  
In death alone, from pain we rest secure.

[Exit.

*End of the fourth Act.*

H 2

ACT





## ACT V. SCENE I.

*The* ANTI-CHAMBER.

CHALONS on the floor, half rais'd, and weeping.

CHALONS.

WHY shou'd it be a sin, when life grows painful,  
 To end it, and to trust futurity?  
 Whom can the wretched here offend above,  
 By hast'ning to hereafter?----Guilt, indeed,  
 Might pale the expiring murd'rer's conscious cheek,  
 Ghastly with fear to meet the dead man's eye,  
 New glaz'd, to glare at vengeance----But the wrong'd,  
 The soul-sick sufferer----the despis'd----th' insulted----  
 The poor, pin'd boneling, that, grown old in want,  
 Begs his cold draught, and drinks it mix'd with scorn;  
 What have these groundling windfalls of the world,  
 To fear from future tempests?----Out, false meteor!  
 Faithless in every form----This life deludes us,  
 Valour's but pride's big bubble. Honesty,  
 The plain man's devious path to shun prosperity.  
 Learning and wit (not prostitutes to power)  
 Are marks for shafted envy. Beauty (curse her!)  
 Lures us to every chase of every joy,  
 That every plague may blast us----Love's blind fool-mark,  
 Stamp'd on the Almighty's weaken'd image, man,  
 Tempts but a woman's mischief.----Down, proud worms!  
 Fill your stretch'd mouths with dust----and farewell all.

*[Throws himself prostrate.]*

*Enter* VALDORE and LA FOY.

LA FOY.

See! my good lord, where on the floor extended,  
 Torn by too fierce a sense of strong distress,  
 The mournful misery of his fate has cast him!

VALDORE,

Leave this dejected bed of humble sorrow----  
 For her, who----from thine softer----sadly fell;  
 Fell, e'en too stain'd and low for this last refuge.

LA

LA FOY.

Find the forgotton firmness of thy brow,  
And with a manly meekness meet compassion.  
Who, that e'er lov'd a woman, liv'd exempt  
From weakness that o'er-rates her?----Fye, CHALONS!  
Is this that sam'd enliv'ner of the field,  
Whose heart grew sprightly at the trumpet's call?  
Oh! I have seen thee war against distress;  
Charge home, on softness and fatigue at once,  
And conquer in both onsets. Come, come, rise;  
Shift this sad scene of shame: Change it for views  
Of opening glory----that shall dazzle pain.  
Look up----the reverend witness of thy weakness  
Hides his own heart's distress, to comfort thine.

CHALONS.

[*Half rais'd.*] Oh! my afflicted father!----That I thus  
Dare face the sorrows on that awful brow,  
(Which but for generous pity of my woes,  
Had felt no home-born pang)----requires more courage,  
Than ever warm'd the veins of warring youth.

VALDORE.

Reach me thy hand----Lean on my feeble aid;  
And, every way confiding, task my help.

CHALONS.

Too much already have I task'd your goodness;  
Too ill have I repay'd its wasted care.  
How can I look on miseries I have made!  
When I was sunk beneath lost mercy's hope;  
Found by no far-strain'd eye----This hand's kind reach,  
Took pity on my wants; stretch'd out relief,  
And drew me from a prison's joyless gloom.

VALDORE.

No more of that sad tale----forget it, now;  
One far more sad repels it.

CHALONS,

Never, never,  
Will I forget the hand's kind help that sav'd me:  
From all this deep distress you call'd me up;  
Chac'd insult, grinding poverty, and shame;  
Heal'd ev'ry infelt sting contempt can wound with;

Gave

62      *The* INSOLVENT: Or,

Gave me your power, friends, fortune----Gave me----Oh !----  
How shall I, trembling, add----gave me your daughter !

VALDORE.

Worse than I fear'd----LA FOY thou hast deceiv'd me.  
Cruel CHALONS !----Since she deserv'd to die,  
Had but her shame dy'd with her, I had strove  
To hold back nature's tax----these father's tears,  
And labour'd to forgive thee.

CHALONS.

Sir ! but hear me.

VALDORE.

'Tis needless----What have artful words to do  
With a pain'd parent's anguish ? Sooth not me  
With unavailing flattery. Let vain youth  
Taste false mens frothy praises----Age is wiser :  
Age has experience in such fruitless wiles----  
Will not be flatter'd----Knows, that rash revenge  
Is blinder than transgression.----How am I sure  
My daughter was not innocent ?----The jealous  
Dream that they see best----when darkest.

LA FOY.

My lord, my lord,  
Lend your ear calmly.

VALDORE.

Had he but let her live to own her guilt ;  
Had I but read it in her silent eye,  
I had forgiven him both----yet one too much.  
He snatch'd the sword from the wrong'd hand of law,  
And plung'd it in the strong's unsentenc'd breast :  
The weak shou'd have escap'd----and touch'd his mercy.

LA FOY.

Give him his way, mistaken grief impels him ;  
Anon, he will be juster.

VALDORE.

Juster !----Juster !----  
What justice has he right to ?----Justice, say'st thou ?  
What justice can the ungrateful squand'rer plead,  
That ruins his redeemer ?----Has he not  
Pour'd misery on my dotage ? All my joys,  
The poor faint remnants of an old man's gleanings,

For



# FILIAL PIETY.

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For his few, feeble wishes! at one blow,  
Cut from their tender root, destroy'd for ever!  
Oh! 'twas a black return----to me, who lov'd him!  
What, tho' he knew not half her claims to pity,  
He shou'd have felt for me. I lov'd----I watch'd her;  
Rais'd her from prattling infancy, to wonder!  
She touch'd my charm'd (perhaps too partial) heart.  
I priz'd her own sweet bloom----Still more endear'd,  
By her dead mother's likeness. He shou'd have stopp'd,  
When his fell point was rais'd, and thought whose pangs  
Were to partake her suff'rings.

CHALONS.

Had she been dead----  
Had she----(but, oh! she is not)----been partaker  
Of her lost paramour's disastrous fate;  
Think then----oh! then----how had my horror torn me;  
Who scarce support, with life, th' undue reproach.

VALDORE.

What says he, my LA FOY? Does he not mean  
That my AMELIA lives?

LA FOY.

She does, my lord:  
I told you that before; but your sad heart  
Repell'd the offer'd comfort.

VALDORE.

Generous CHALONS!  
Scarce has the daughter's crime more wrong'd thy goodness,  
Than did the father's anguish.

CHALONS.

Oh! my dear lord----  
Cou'd some descending angel but restore  
Her innocence (for ever lost!)----Lend peace  
Of mind once more----and make life tasteful to her;  
To such excess of fondness am I her's,  
That I wou'd burn discernment's eyes to blindness,  
Rather than see a fault, in one so lov'd----  
So much has this day's torture cost my soul!

LA FOY.

CHALONS, thou hast a sure friend's voice in heav'n.  
My general oft wou'd say----" Pray, soldiers, pray;

" If

64      *The* INSOLVENT: *Or,*

"If you deserve success----'Tis yours for asking."  
 Alas! I have too seldom try'd this power;  
 Who knows, but some such angel as you wish'd for,  
 (I am no teasing, troublesome invoker)  
 May in yon closet, on my prayer descend,  
 And whiten the stain'd name that paints your love.

*[Goes, and unlocks the closet.]*

VALDORE.

Poor man!----Thy griefs have touch'd thy pitying friend,  
 'Till his hurt brain grows frantic.

LA FOY.

Appear, thou wing-clipt dæmon!----If thou hop'st  
 To shun the doom that waits perdition's tribe,  
 Wash thy sav'd soul from all its native black,  
 And take an angel's form----Truth's convert friend.

LA FOY *leads out* FLORELLA.

VALDORE.

What means this?----FLORELLA!

FLORELLA.

I once was FLORELLA;  
 But heav'n has touch'd my heart with will so new,  
 That my old name offends me.

LA FOY.

Answer, first,  
 Truly and briefly, as when late I caught thee,  
 Skulking through night's lone gloom, that wanted shade  
 To suit thy darker purpose----Answer, plainly,  
 Is thy unhappy lady innocent,  
 In AUMELE's dire admission to her chamber;  
 Or, is she guilty of it?

FLORELLA.

Innocent.

VALDORE.

How!----Innocent?

CHALONS.

A wife----her husband absent,  
 Admits a lover in his room, at midnight----  
 Found in her chamber, in a loose dis-robe;

Nay,

# FILIAL PIETY.

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Nay, in the husband's night-dress----Yet all this,  
Thy venal evidence (false maid!) calls innocence!

LA FOY.

Pray, let her speak. My lord, you are a judge;  
Shou'd an accuser brow-beat witnesses,  
Or interrupt their answers?

[To VALDORE.]

CHALONS.

Nay, LA FOY;  
Pity, thus forc'd, grows insult. I have told thee,  
I heard her loud reproach confess the guilt,  
To am'rous AUMELE, when kneeling by her bed.  
She call'd him, cruel AUMELE----Bid him begone;  
For, if he there was found, her name was blasted.

LA FOY.

Away with such strain'd proofs. Had I myself  
Been there, but on some far more honest purpose,  
Poor soul! she might have said the same to me;  
When blund'ring accident alone had brought me.

VALDORE.

I think, CHALONS, you said that AUMELE knelt  
But near AMELIA's bed----Was it not more?

FLORELLA.

Had it been more----She still were innocent;  
Unconscious of his coming. I alone  
Was guilty. I (betray'd by bribe's profusion)  
Admitted the deaf, head-strong, thoughtless lover,  
Both to the house and chamber. I advis'd  
The night-gown's needful cover. I gave notice  
Of your wrong'd lordship's absence; taught him how  
To personate your chanc'd return; soft whispering,  
That if she wak'd not ere he reach'd her bed,  
Whate'er succeeded, might be meant for you.

LA FOY.

Now, now CHALONS! what now becomes of all  
Those mad mis-proofs of guilt she shines untouch'd by?  
By heav'n! 'tis plain, to me, she wak'd too full  
Of your remember'd image, to mistake  
For that th' intruder's loath'd one. She reproach'd  
Not her accomplish'd, but intended, ruin:

I

And,



And, tho' the traitor not unjustly fell,  
His crime was nobly, by her guarded virtue,  
Prevented, and ideal.

FLORELLA.

Never breath'd  
A virtue more untainted. May my soul,  
In time's last dreadful judgment meet no mercy,  
If ever wife more faithful blest'd a husband ;  
Or, with more cautious conduct, fear'd a lover.

VALDORE.

Oh ! what hast thou deserv'd----if this her due ?

CHALONS.

Pity, forgiveness---A safe bought retreat,  
To some sweet convent's silent space for prayer :  
For penitence to heav'n---and 'scape from shame.  
More shall be her's ; for, oh ! my gracious lord,  
'Tis by her just amends for cast-off sin,  
Your own paternal tenderness---my love---  
And my brave, honest, generous friend's compassion,  
Are all redeem'd, at once, from deep despair.  
Go, fly FLORELLA---Take this guilty key---  
Tell the poor captive innocent this tale ;  
And court her to be blest'd, by blessing all.

[Gives her the key, and exit FLORELLA.

VALDORE.

[Kneeling.] Thou ! ever-gracious, ever present power !  
That, first, inspires our virtue---loves it, next ;  
And guards it, in conclusion !---Take, Oh ! take  
An old man's awful thanks, for days prolong'd ;  
Days doom'd, by grief, to pain---now sav'd for joy !

CHALONS.

[Kneeling.] From me (most worthless of the mercy shewn)  
Accept, all-worship'd author of all bliss !  
The pour'd-out heart's whole tide of grateful pray'r.

LA FOY.

Let not me seem least sensible of zeal,  
Because less taught to speak it. [Kneels too.]---Had I words,  
I wou'd adore heav'n eloquently---(Now)---  
Receive a plain blunt heart's sincerest thanks,  
For more than I deserve---or know to tell.

FLORELLA

# FILIAL PIETY.

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FLORELLA *within, speaks.*

FLORELLA. Oh ! horror ! horror !---Comfort comes too late ;  
Death intercepts relief---and help is vain.

*All start up in confusion ; and LA FOY, running out, meets  
and assists FLORELLA, leading in AMELIA bleeding.*

CHALONS.

Defend me from this vision's ghastly menace,  
Or I am lost again !

VALDORE.

Hapless AMELIA !

What has thy rashness done ? Just heav'n, but now,  
Hear'd our given thanks---Thy innocence stood clear'd.

FLORELLA, guilty, prov'd thy virtue wrong'd :  
And, in this ill-chosen crisis of our joy,  
Thou murder'st thy own blessing !

AMELIA.

[*Kneeling to VALDORE.*] Heaven was too kind !  
That eas'd my honour'd father's aching sense,  
Of a lost daughter's shame ! Death, in this thought,  
Robb'd of its sharpest sting, grows half a friend.

[*To CHALONS ; who raises her, weeping.*] Oh ! too unkind

CHALONS !---What shall I say---

What shall distrust'd honour---think---of thee ?  
I cannot---must not---blame---thy dreadful rage ;  
Appearance was against me.---Ah ! ebb flow,  
My offer'd blood---Give my sick, trembling heart  
One moment's short reprieve---to clear my name.

CHALONS.

Pause, my faint, injur'd charmer---thy clear'd name,  
Is spotless as thy beauty.

VALDORE.

Save thy shook spirits.

CHALONS.

FLORELLA ! fly---Go, call immediate aid.

LA FOY.

No---let her stay---I'll haste myself, my lord.

[*Exit LA FOY.*

I 2

VALDORE.

VALDORE.

How hast thou given thy breast that fatal wound ?

AMELIA.

Shut up with horror, and bound in with death,

'Twas natural to despise familiar fear.

Shunning the breathless corps, that clogg'd my way,

I stumbled o'er a sword---Thus, learnt its use---

And thank'd it, for escape from dreaded shame.

Living, and hopeless to attract belief,

To the unhappy story of my woe ;

The eye of ev'ry gazer's dumb reproach,

Had given a sharper wound, than this I chose.

VALDORE.

Did'st thou discover the vile youth's disguise ?

Or---wert thou sleeping, and unconscious found ?

When his bold craft surpriz'd thee ?

AMELIA.

Troubled thoughts,

For my departed lord's so sudden absence,

Chas'd from my eye-lids with all power of sleep.

Anxiously doubtful for his safe return,

Alarm'd by apprehension's busy fears,

And wond'ring what strange hasty cause had call'd him---

I started---when the door's soft opening sound

Gave glanc'd admission to th' intrusive tread,---

Poring, I shook with terror---for I saw

(By the pale, gleamy, ghost-like glaze of light)

That nor the force nor freedom shew'd that ease

Of manly grace, that marks my mienful lord.

CHALONS.

Oh ! I was born to curses---thus to wrong

Such tenderness of virtue !

AMELIA.

Twice I rais'd

My frighted voice---and twice he try'd, in vain,

To sooth it into silence. Failing that,

Grew fearful of discovery---paus'd amaz'd,

Stepp'd back---return'd---stood doubtful---till, at last,

He threw himself on his presumptuous knees,

As



As (my dear, angry lord) you found, and heard him.  
Nearer than that (by the blest hopes I haste to!  
When, from this world of grief, I rise to peace!)  
He never had approach'd me,---Ah!---farewel---  
My swimming eyes, dim'd o'er, have lost your forms,  
And I am cover'd round with dark---sick---shadow.

VALDORE.

[Kissing her.] Dear, dying child!---Her lips are cold and pale.  
Farewel, too ill-star'd girl!---farewel---for ever.

CHALONS.

She cannot die. Heav'n is too kind, too just,  
To excellence like her's---to let that be.

VALDORE.

Lead, to her chamber---Gently guide her feet,  
They lose---(Oh killing fight!) their own sweet motion.

[Exit AMELIA, led off by CHALONS and FLORELLA.]

Enter LA FOY, with BELGARD.

VALDORE.

Alas! you're come too late, See, where they lead her---  
Lifeless, and past all sense of art's lost care.

LA FOY.

Follow, BELGARD; haste, urge thy utmost skill:  
Snatch her from death---and thou command'st my fortune.

[Exit BELGARD.]

VALDORE.

I knew BELGARD---unknowing of his skill.

LA FOY.

He practis'd many a year, sav'd many a life,  
In war's deep wounding rage---but peace came on,  
And his shunn'd virtue starv'd him.---'Twas not him,  
I purpos'd to have call'd; but met him, coming  
To warn us, lord AUMELE (who now supports him)---  
Fir'd at his son's presumptuous levity,  
His watch'd admission here, and whole night's absence,  
Comes, with intent to note and tell his practice;  
Then take such measures as you best approve.

VALDORE.

# 20      **THE INSOLVENT, &c.**

**VALDORE.**  
 What shall we do?—He seeks a living son;  
 He finds a dead one. Unprepar'd event  
 But, he must bear his part—and share distress.

**LA FOY.**  
 'Twas due to his hard heart.—My curse (provok'd  
 By his unfeeling wrong to my dead general)  
 Falls heavy on his head—to teach him pity.

*Enter CHALONE and BELGARD.*

**CHALONS.**

Bless'd, my **LA FOY**, be thy successful call  
 Of this good angel's aid!—She wakes!—She breathes!—  
 He tells me she shall live!—Her opening eye  
 Adds to the morning's light, and shines once more.

**VALDORE.**  
 Then is indulgent heav'n grown kind indeed.

**BELGARD.**

The wound, itself not mortal, gather'd danger  
 From weak'ning waste of blood: her spirits, thence,  
 Lost vigour to sustain the toilsome length  
 Of agoniz'd complaint, I'm told, she made.  
 So, fainting, she seem'd dead; but rest, with aid  
 Of skill'd attention, will restore her soon.

**LA FOY.**

Let us forethink of old **AUMELE**'s approach.

**VALDORE.**

I'll justify the fate that reach'd his son.

**LA FOY.**

Warn'd by that fate, the brutal mind shall feel  
 Pangs, due to cruel breasts, with hearts of steel.  
 On their own heads shall fall woe's driving rain,  
 And drown too bold contempt of other's pain.  
 Pity shall smile, to see th' unpitier fall;  
 And he who aids no want, shall suffer all.

4 AP 54

**F I N I S**

# EPILOGUE.

(By AARON HILL, Esq;)

Spoke by AMELIA.

*I'VE 'scap'd, to-night, two terrible disasters;  
My honour's indignation----and my master's:  
And heaven best knows what hapless hole can hide me,  
If (to crown all my woes) your help's deny'd me.*

*LADIES, you see how much expos'd our sex is;  
Sleeping, or waking, some sad chance perplexes.  
Man's a more wily snake than mother EVE's was;  
In his own shape----and others too----deceives us.  
Hungry devourer! never tir'd with snapping;  
Shun him with open eyes----he'll catch us napping:  
And how to 'scape him, if I know----ne'er let me  
Break thro' th' entangling nets, that thus beset me.*

*Now, GENTLEMEN, to your own thoughts appealing,  
(Fitter, I doubt, for making wounds----than healing)  
What wou'd you have poor women do with honour,  
When danger heaps such monstrous loads upon her?*

*D'ye think in conscience now----half-wak'd, half-weary  
With foregone frights, for one's departed deary----  
'Tbad been so strange a crime----or worth such pother,  
In darkness to mistake one dear for t'other?*

*Pray think on't----Put yourselves behind the curtain;  
What can't be cur'd must be endur'd----that's certain.*



## EPILOGUE.

'Tis a fair question---and 'tis plainly ask'd ye:  
Answer it---or confess, I've over-task'd ye.  
Suppose me bound in sleep's soft, silken fetter,  
And one of your dear selves the dark besetter:

Sight has no eyes, at midnight---and, for touches,  
"JOAN," (says the proverb) "in the dark's a dutchess."  
For my part---I can't find we've any senses,  
Can furnish such attacks with fit defences.  
Let trusty spouse, when business sends him packing,  
("Safe bind safe find") leave no due caution lacking.

I see some judge-like eyes, that look too sprightly  
To miss a *she* law-point, put to 'em rightly.  
Is mine the court's decree?---I humbly move it;  
That, if your hearts affirm---your hands approve it.

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